

DELL

MARCH-MAY 10¢

The Flying A's

RANGE RIDER



FRONTIER JUSTICE



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In the days of the Gold Rush, the West very often seemed to be growing too fast to keep up with itself. The mining camps were booming and violence thriving before there was any organized law and order to keep a check-rein on banditry.

But as always, even when the times were at their wildest, honest and fearless men rose up to retrieve vanished justice. One such man was an enraged newspaper editor of early-day San Francisco who whipped together the City's first Vigilante Society. For lack of something better, the Vigilantes transformed an old sailing ship, the "Euphemia" into the local jail. They seem to have had little trouble in filling it to capacity.

Men of courage were not limited to California, however. In Montana, a group of men, led by John X. Beidler banded together, also taking the name "Vigilantes." Their purpose was to round up a large and cutthroat gang ironically called the "Innocents," which was terrorizing Virginia City and the surrounding mining camps. Unbeknownst to the local citizens, the leader of the "Innocents" was the Sheriff of Virginia City, Henry Plummer. Beidler's Vigilantes, as good detectives as they were citizens, cracked open the gang and meted out justice with a firm hand.

They called "miners' courts," which consisted of twenty-four men and a judge, who usually presided from the back of a wagon. The verdicts of these trials were nearly always "Guilty!" and punishment was delivered on the spot.



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the Flying A's **RANGE RIDER** TRIAL OF VENGEANCE

FUNNY! I DIDN'T
NOTICE ANYONE FOLLOWING
ME AS WE LEFT ELKVILLE
... I WONDER...

ON A HIGH TRAIL IN THE MOUNTAINS...

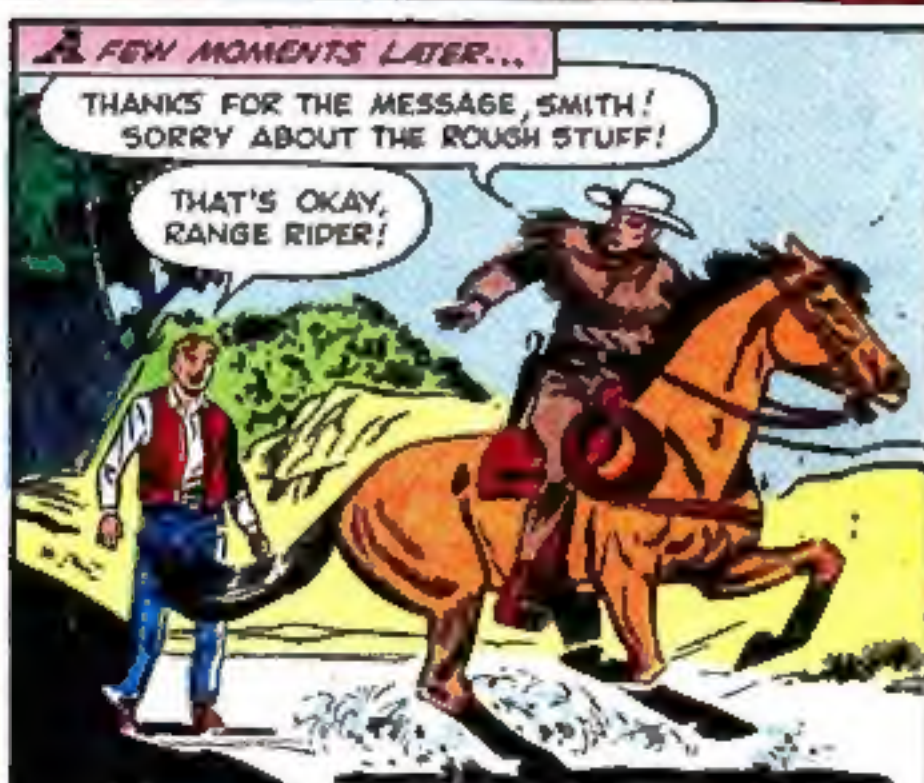
COME ON, BOY!
LET'S SEE IF
OUR FRIEND
HAS ANY
IDEAS!

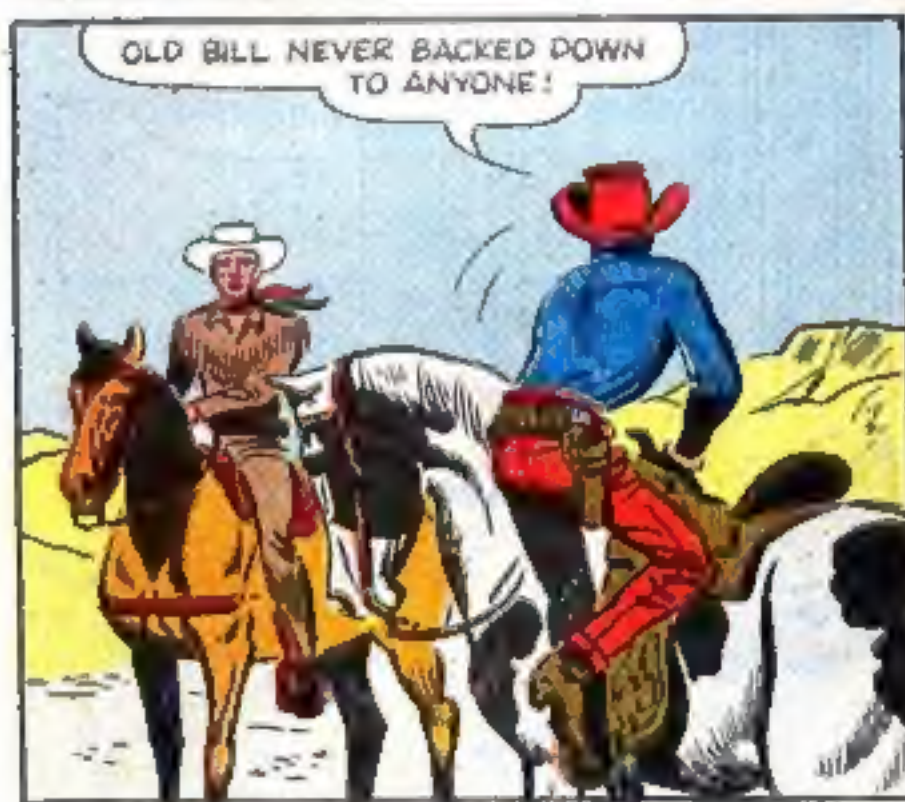
I CAN'T LET HIM GET AWAY!
I'VE GOT TO CATCH HIM!

I WAS RIGHT! I'M BEING FOLLOWED!
NOW TO FIND OUT WHY!

THAT MAN LOOKS LIKE THE
NEW HOMESTEADER THAT
MOVED IN NEXT TO ME! I'D
BETTER PLAY THIS SAFE!







SOME TIME LATER...

THERE'S DESERTVILLE,
DICK! NOW TO FIND
BILL!

LOOKS
PEACEFUL
ENOUGH!



THIS TOWN IS
NOTHING BUT A
GHOST TOWN!

YOU'RE WRONG, DICK!
LOOK OVER THERE!



HOWDY! WHAT'S HAPPENED
TO EVERYBODY? I'M THE
RANGE RIDER, AND THIS IS
MY PARTNER, DICK WEST!

I KNOW!
YOU'RE
UNDER
ARREST!



HOLD ON, MISTER!
WE JUST GOT
HERE!

AND WHAT'S
MORE, WE HAVEN'T
DONE ANYTHING!

DISARM
THEM,
BOYS!



WHAT'S THIS? WHAT'S
GOING ON?

THE LAUGH'S ON YOU, RANGE RIDER!
YOU JUST RODE INTO YOUR HANGIN'!





STOP TALKING IN RIDDLES! WHAT'S THIS ALL ABOUT?

JUST STEP INSIDE! YOU'LL FIND OUT!



ALL RIGHT, GENTLEMEN! YOUR DAYS OF CRIME ARE ABOUT OVER! HAVE YOU ANYTHING TO SAY?

YES! WHO ARE YOU?



THE NAME IS BATT! MEAN ANYTHING TO YOU? IT *SHOULD*! YOU KILLED MY YOUNGER BROTHER, CLAY BATT, A FEW YEARS AGO!

WHY, YOU MUST BE RANSOM BATT!



I AM! AND I'M HERE TO SEE THAT JUSTICE IS DONE, AND THAT YOU PAY FOR YOUR CRIME!

HOLD ON, BATT! YOUR BROTHER WAS SHOT WHEN HE WAS TRYING TO *BUSHWHACK* A U.S. MARSHAL! DICK AND I WERE THERE, TOO!



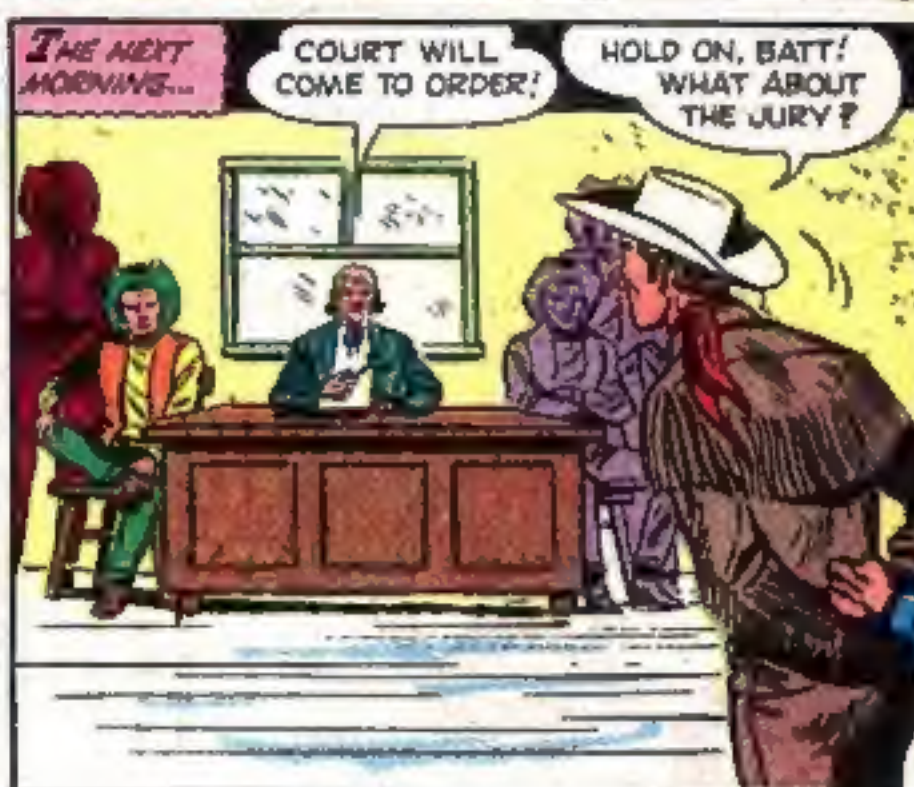
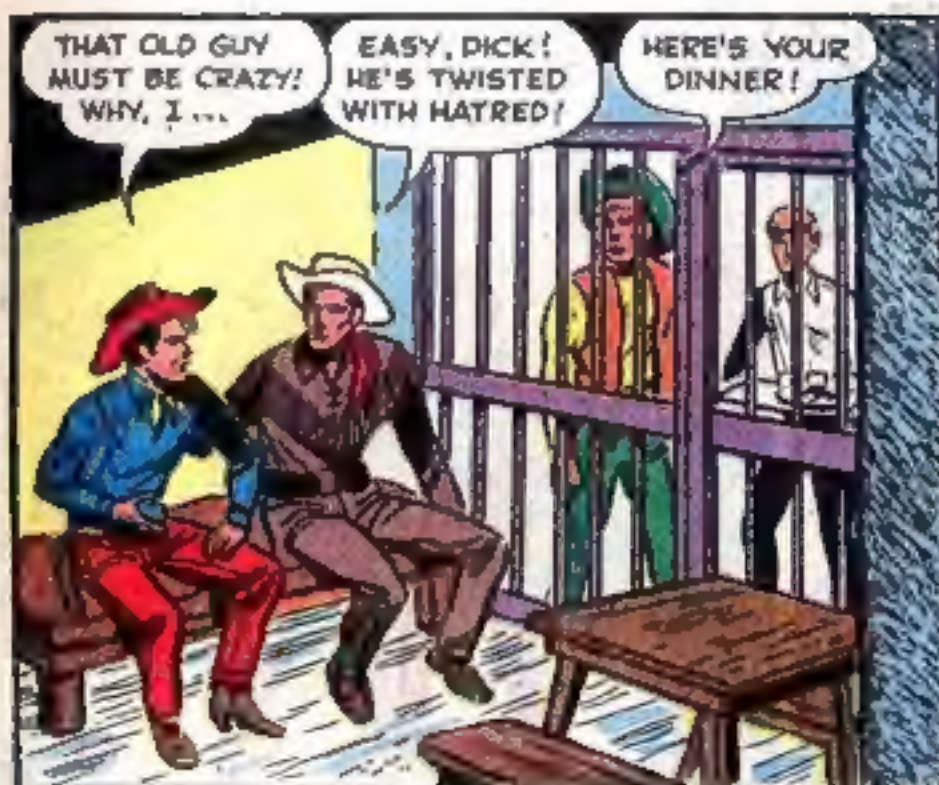
THAT'S RIGHT! CLAY AND SEVERAL OTHERS TRIED TO GET *US* ONE DAY, BUT WE BEAT HIM TO THE PUNCH! IT WAS SELF-DEFENSE!

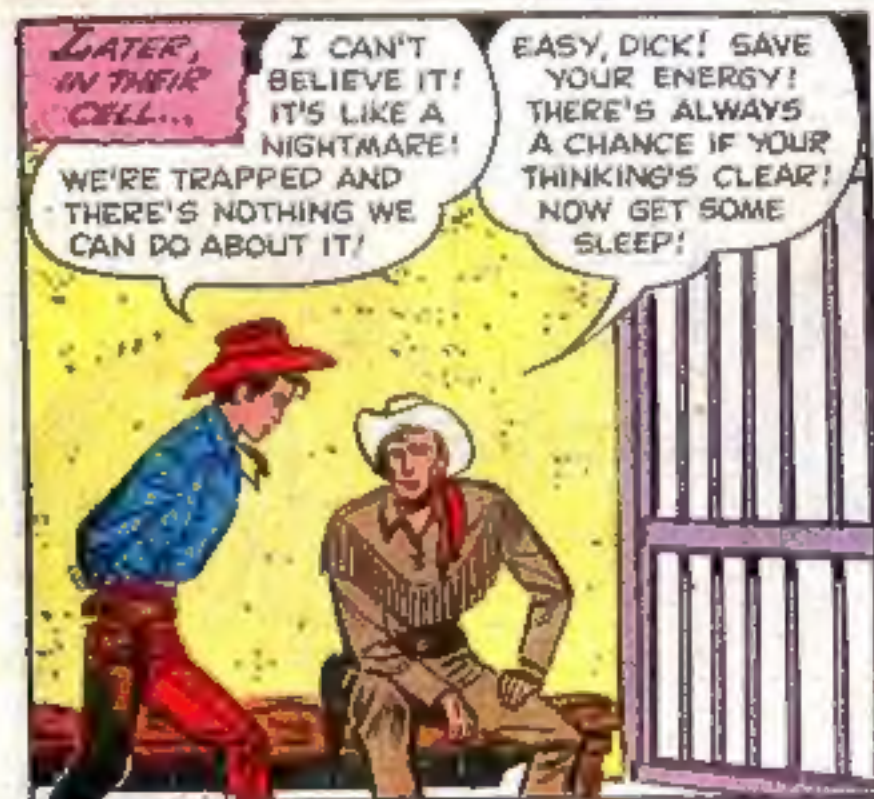
YOU'RE LYING! BUT NOW THAT YOU'RE IN *MY* TOWN, WE'LL SEE WHAT THE JURY SAYS IN THE MORNING! *LOCK THEM UP!*

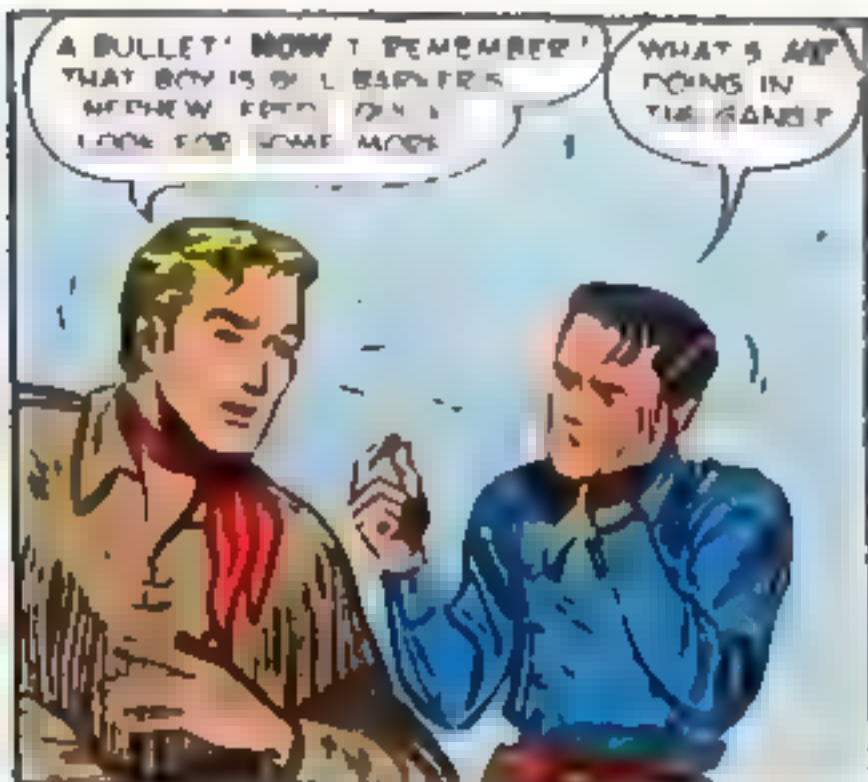
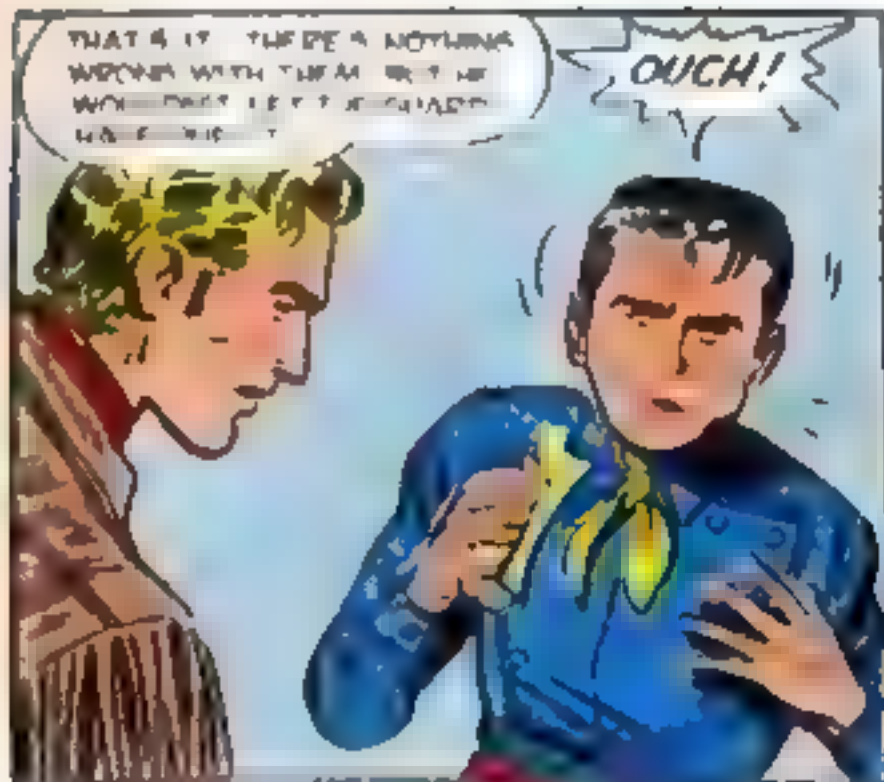


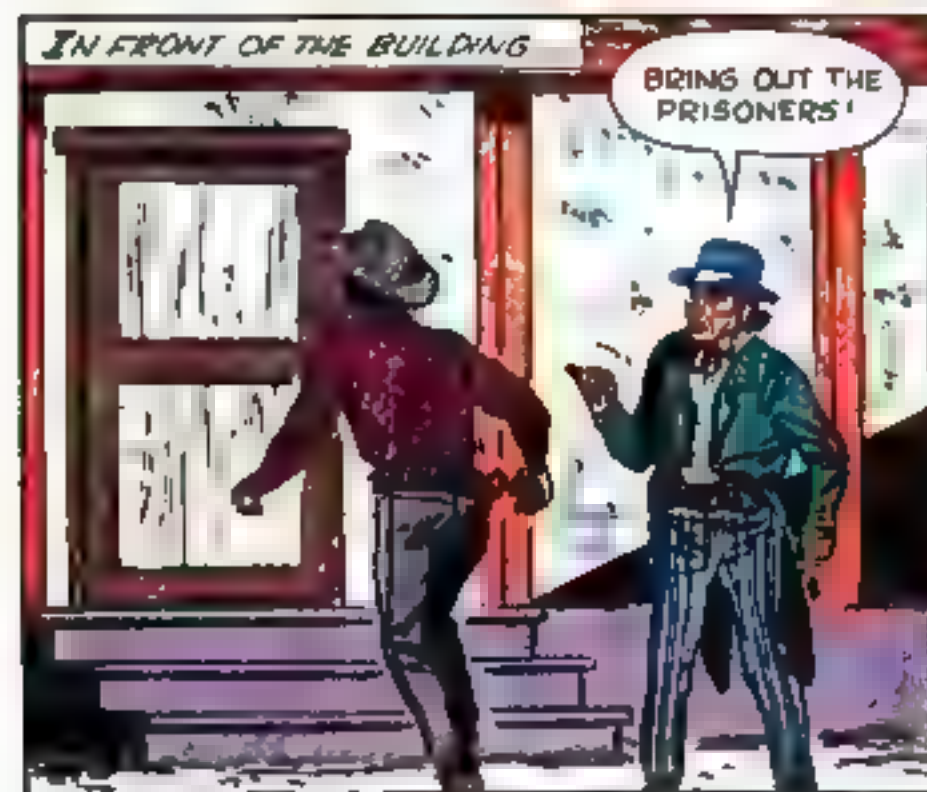
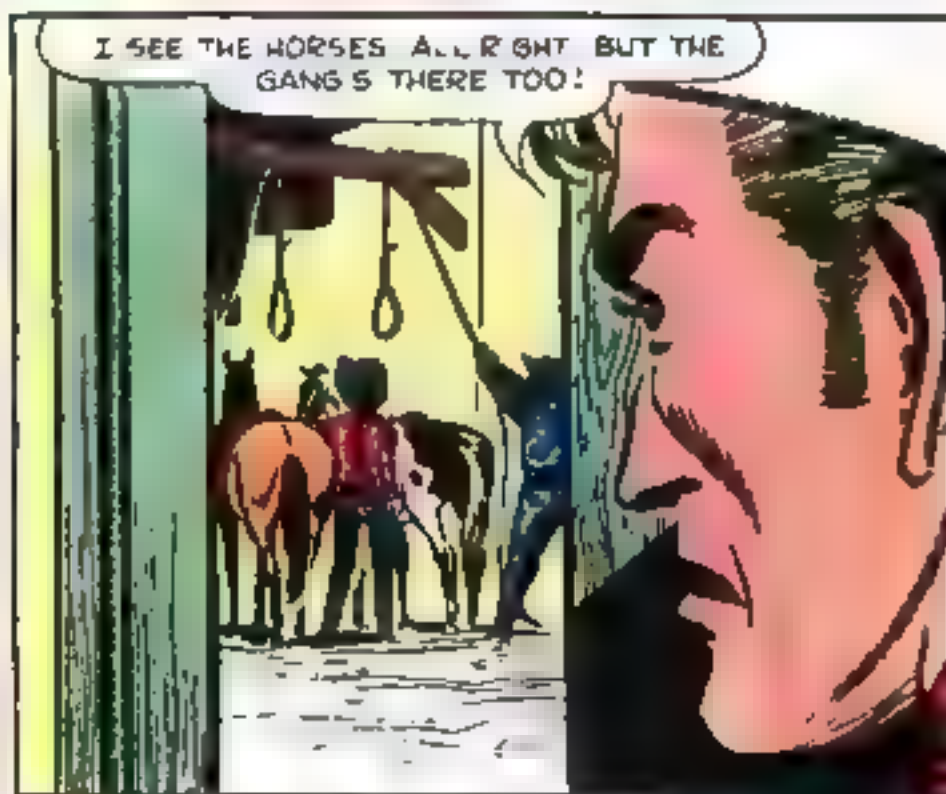
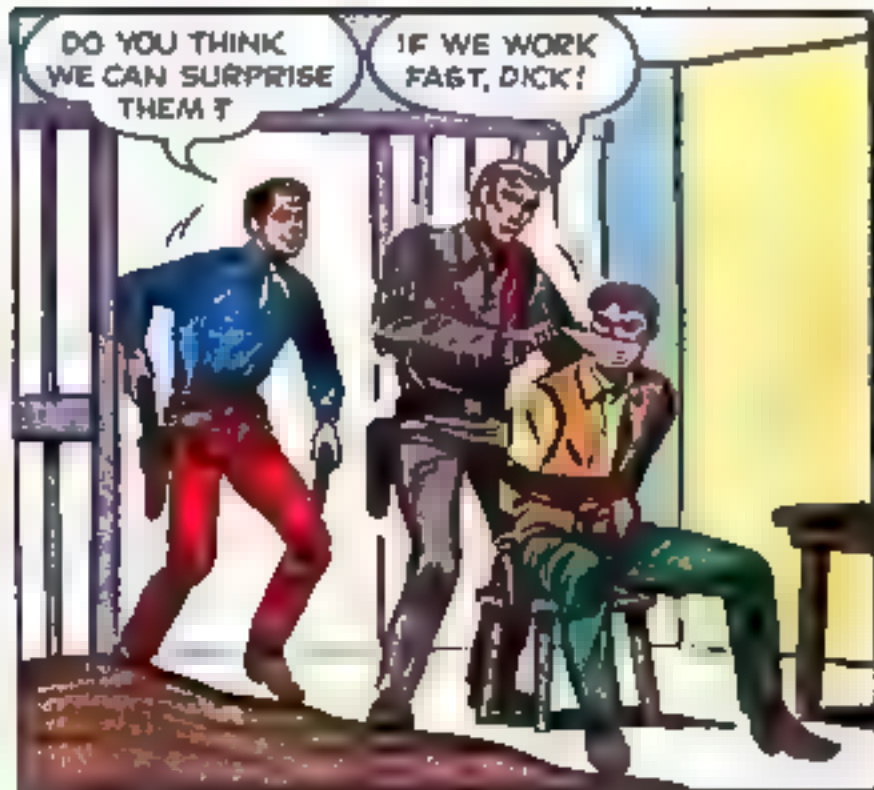
THIS INCIDENT WAS CLEARED SEVERAL YEARS AGO BY A U.S. JUDGE! WHO'S THE JUDGE OUT HERE?

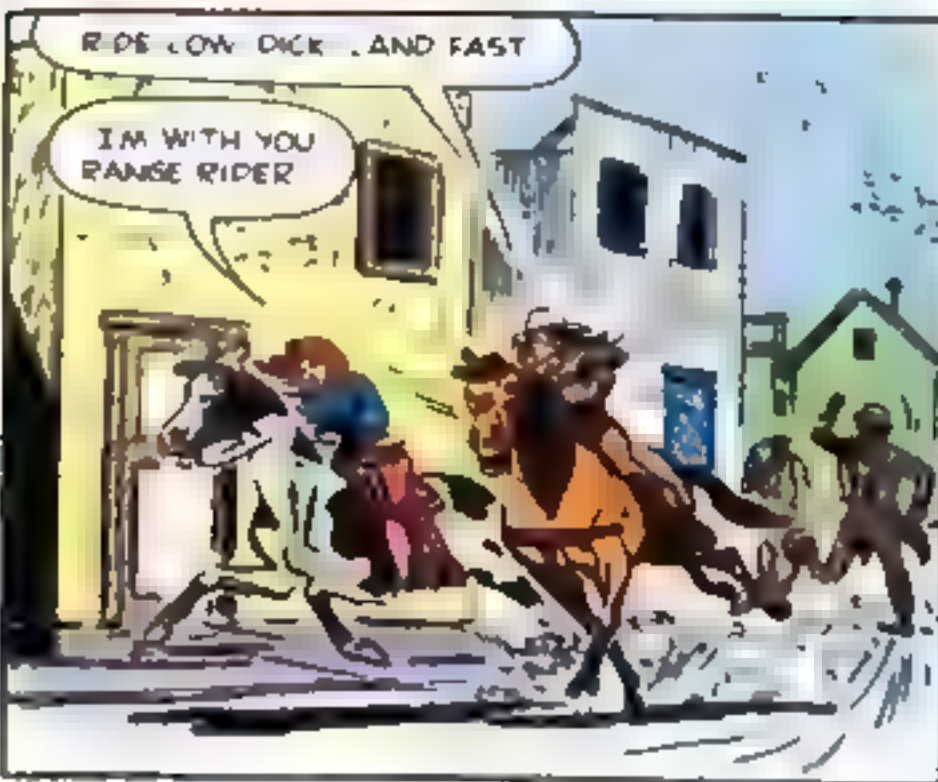
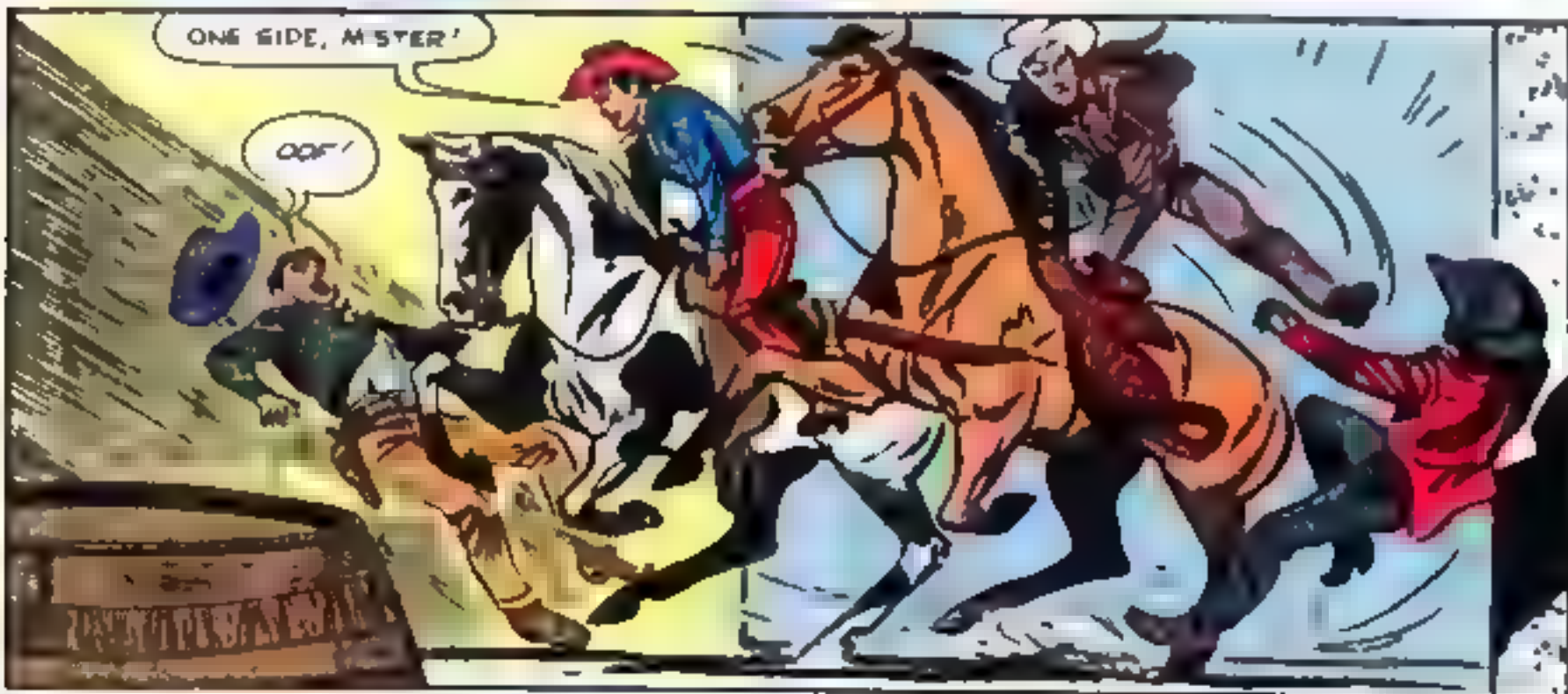
IT SO HAPPENS THAT *I'M* THE JUDGE HERE! YOUR TRIAL WILL BE SWIFT!













AFTER EM MEN' IF YOU LOSE THEM
I'LL HAVE YOUR HIDES'



THIS IS A GOOD SPOT' IN HERE QUICK!



I DON'T GET IT
WE'RE FREE NOW
WHY GO BACK?

BECAUSE OF FRED' HE'S IN
DANGER NOW AND BESIDES
THIS IS A GOOD CHANCE
TO FIND BILL BARKER



LET'S GO' WE HAVEN'T ANY TIME TO ASSESS

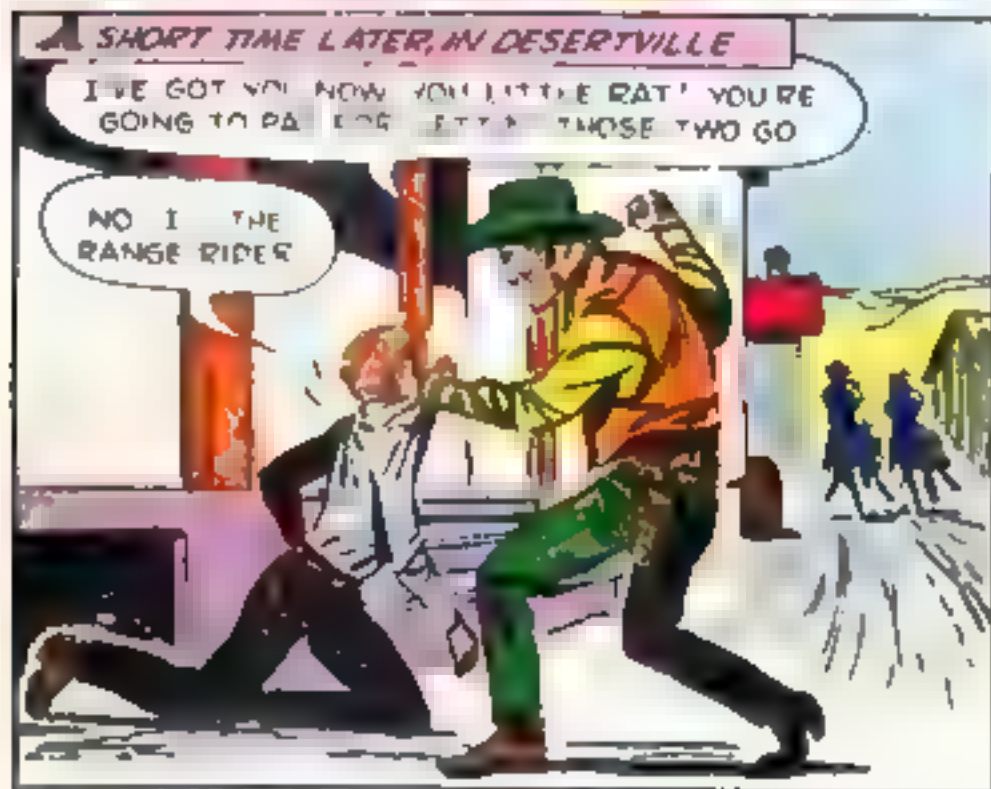
YOU'RE RIGHT IT TOOK
LOT OF COURAGE FOR
FRED TO HELP US'



A SHORT TIME LATER, IN DESERTVILLE

I'VE GOT YOU NOW YOU LITTLE RAT' YOU'RE
GOING TO PAY FOR LETTING THOSE TWO GO

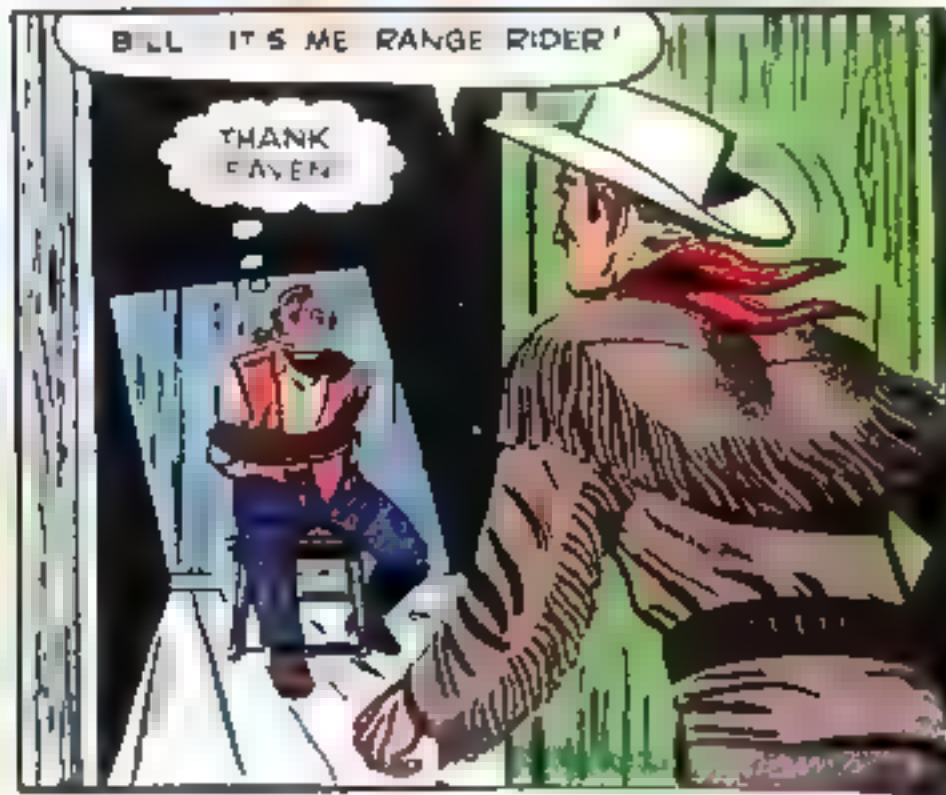
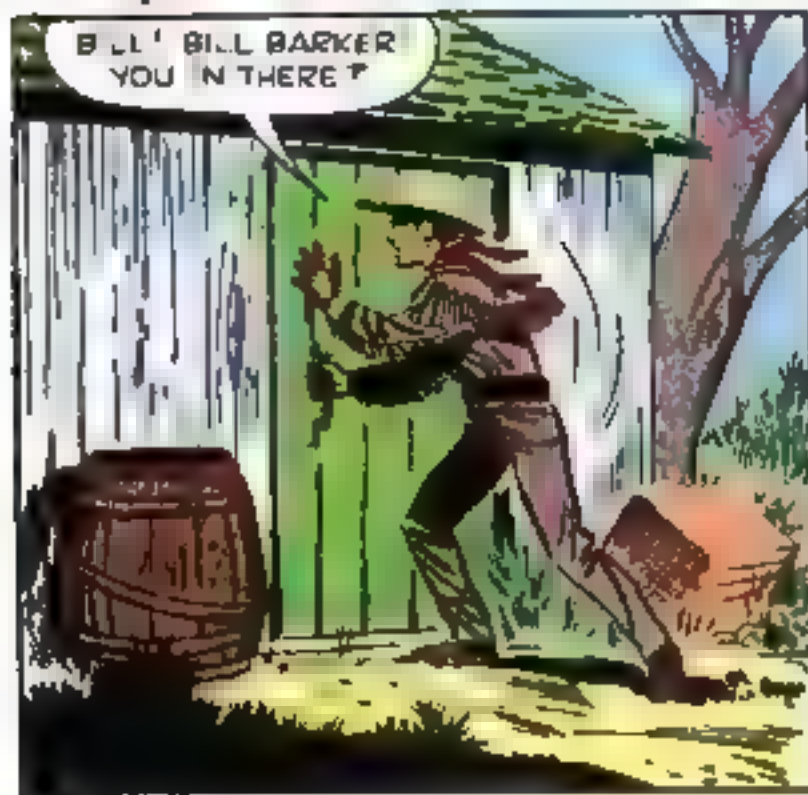
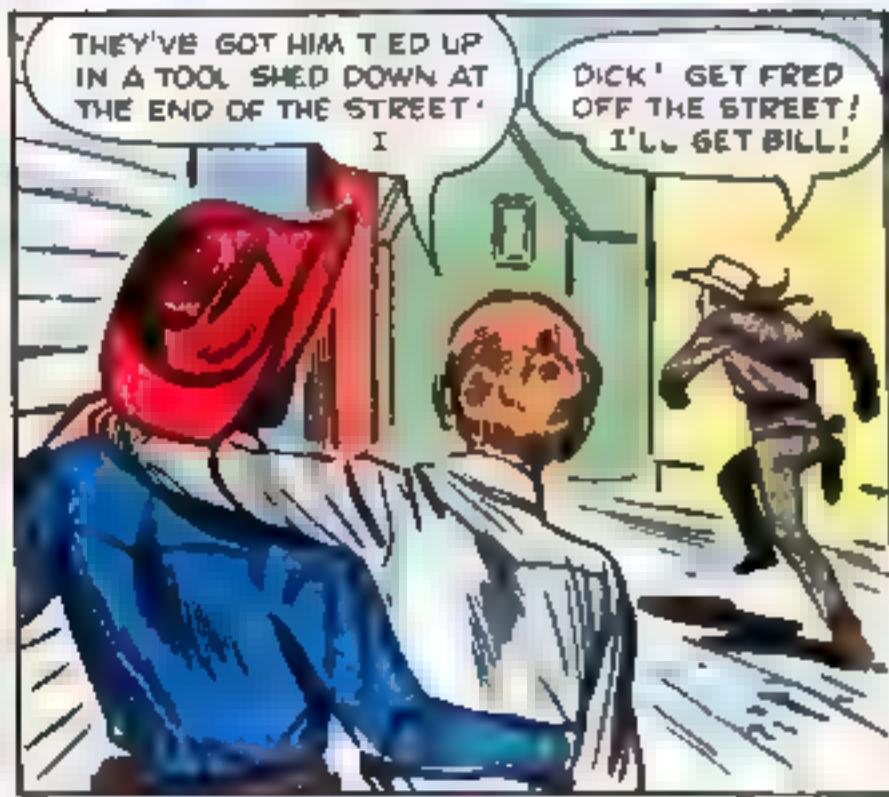
NO I THE
RANGE RIDER

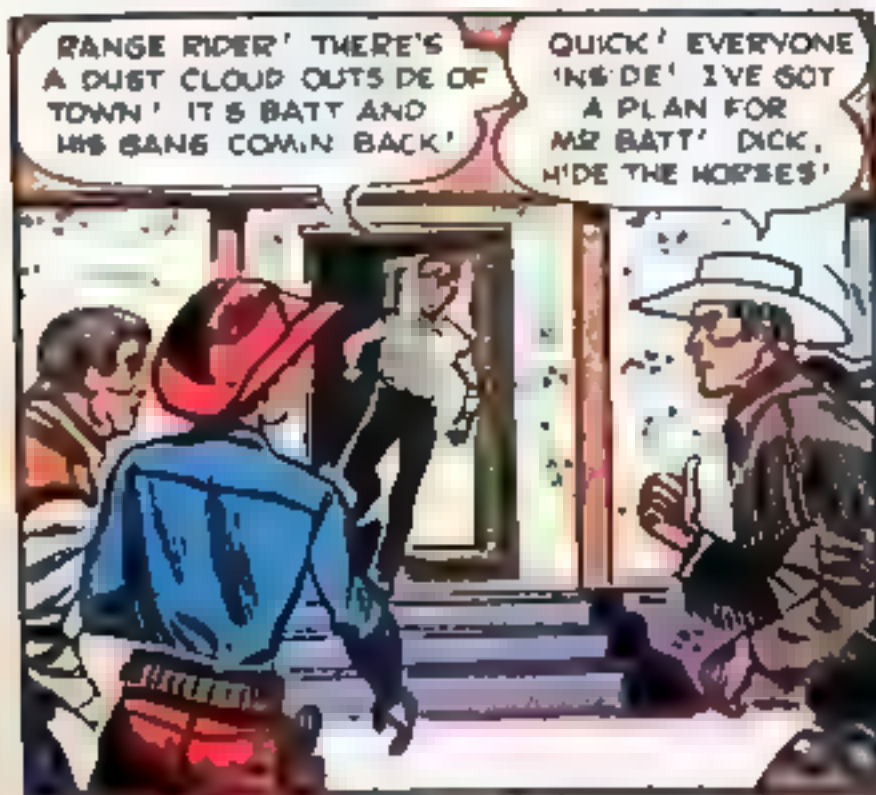
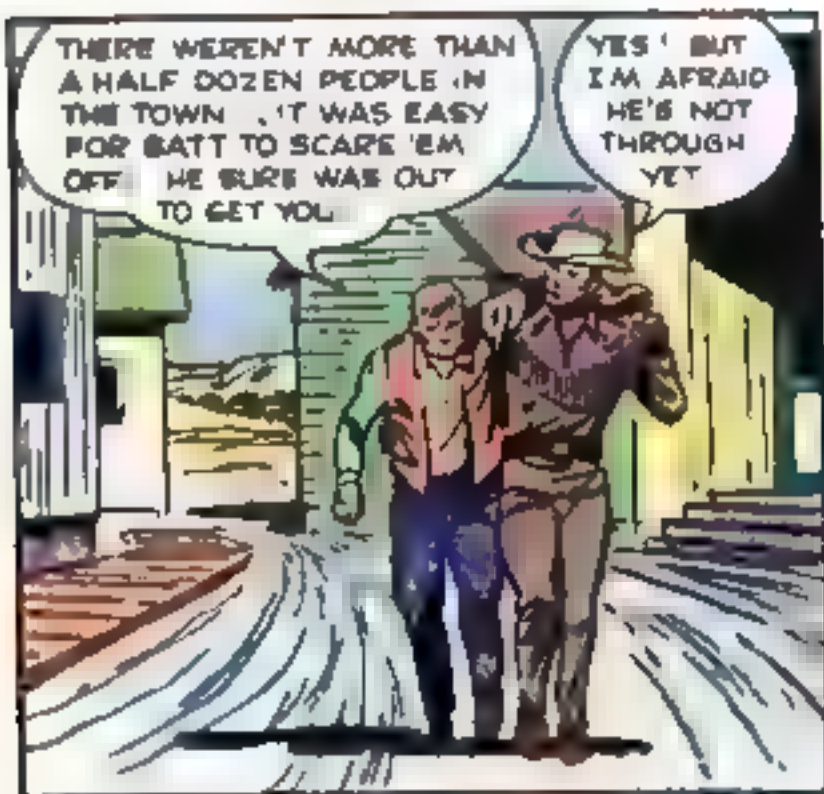
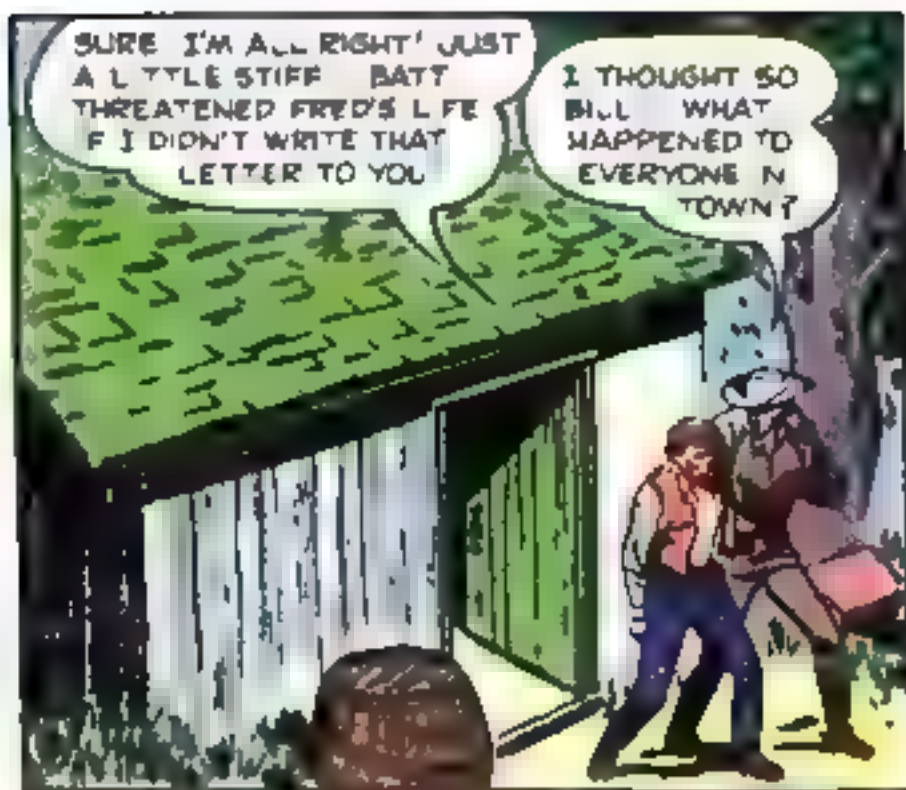


THAT'S ENOUGH'

WHAT ?







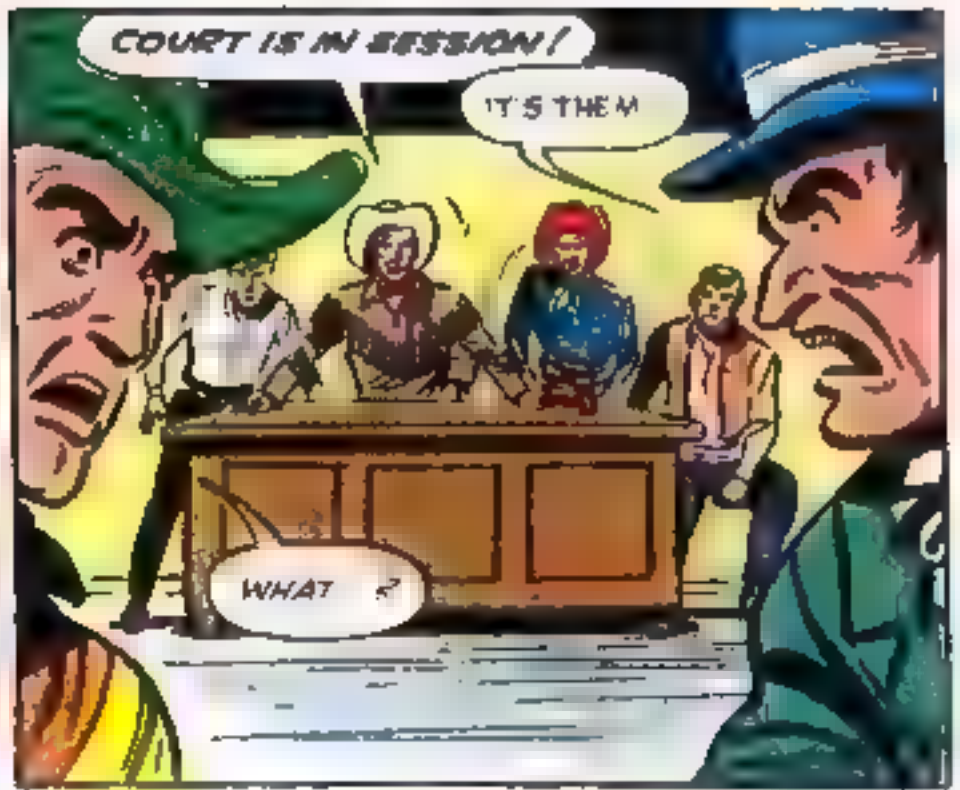
WE'LL WAIT HERE A SPELL AND SEE IF THE RANGE RIDER MAKES ANOTHER ATTEMPT AT OUR BAIT. I'LL GET THAT MAN WITH MY OWN BRAND OF JUSTICE OR ELSE



COURT IS IN SESSION!

IT'S THEM

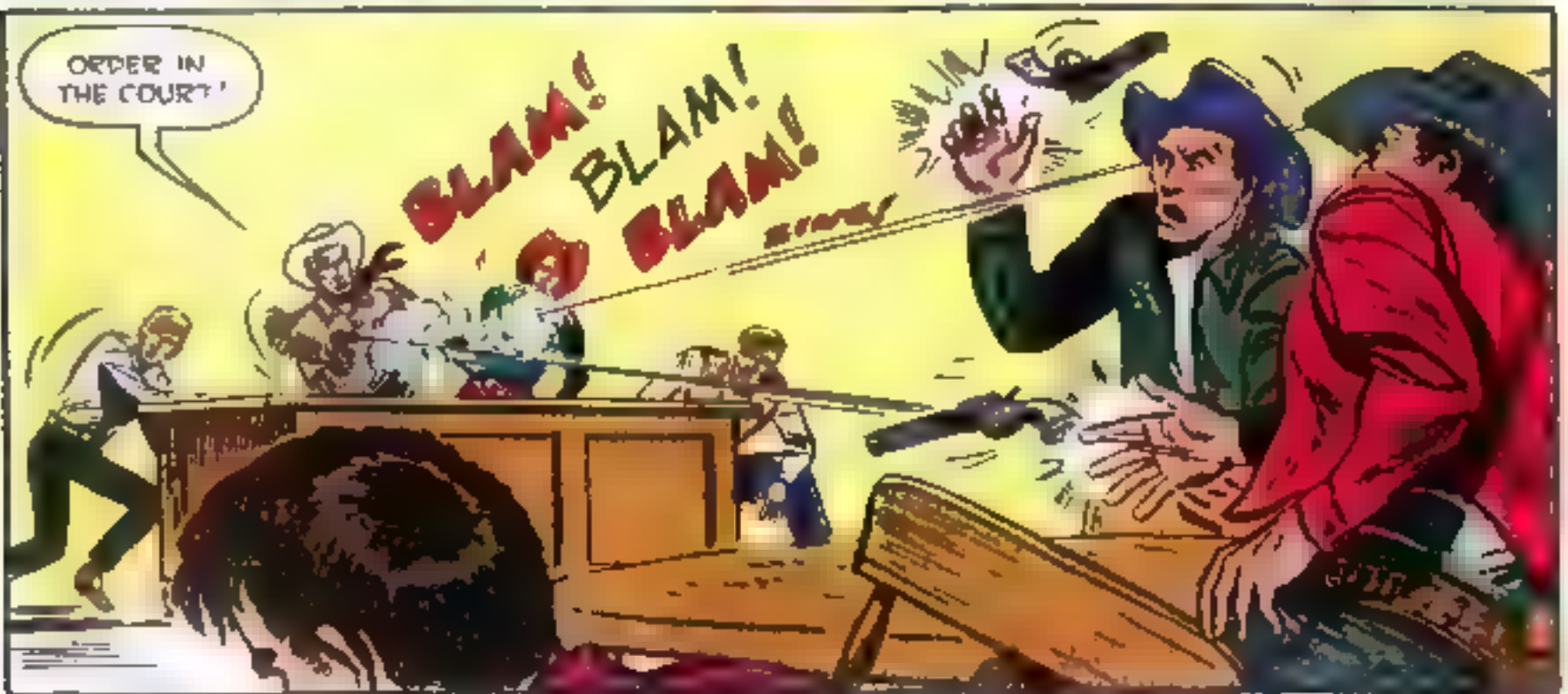
WHAT?



ORDER IN THE COURT!

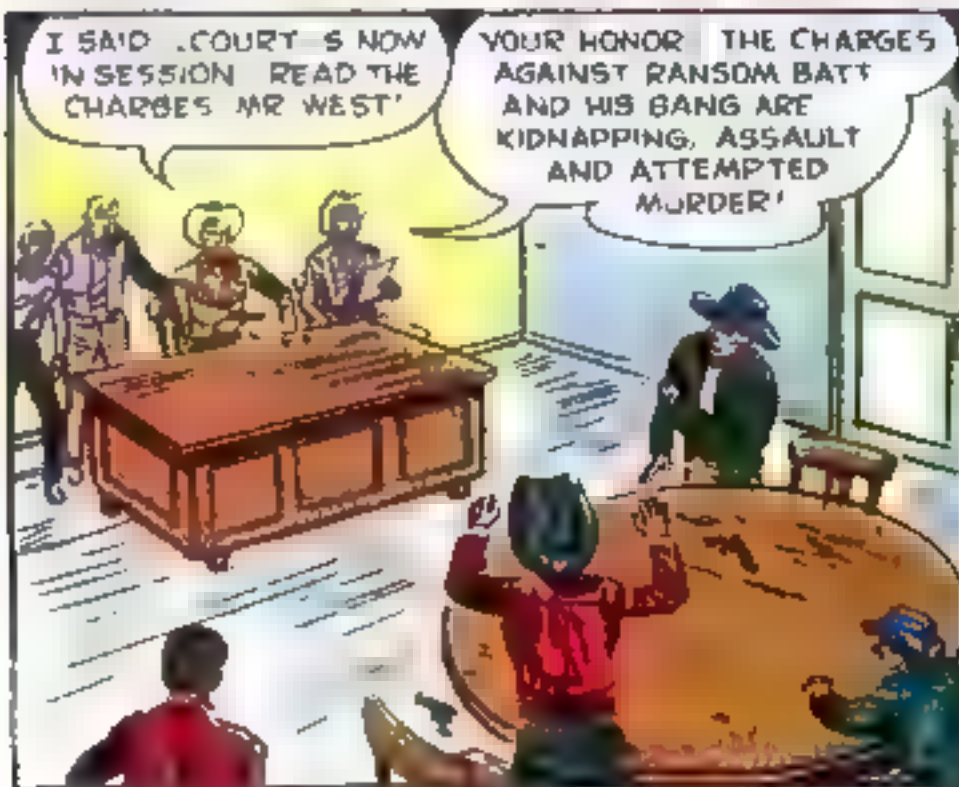
BLAM! BLAM! BLAM!

SHOTS



I SAID 'COURT IS NOW IN SESSION. READ THE CHARGES MR WEST'

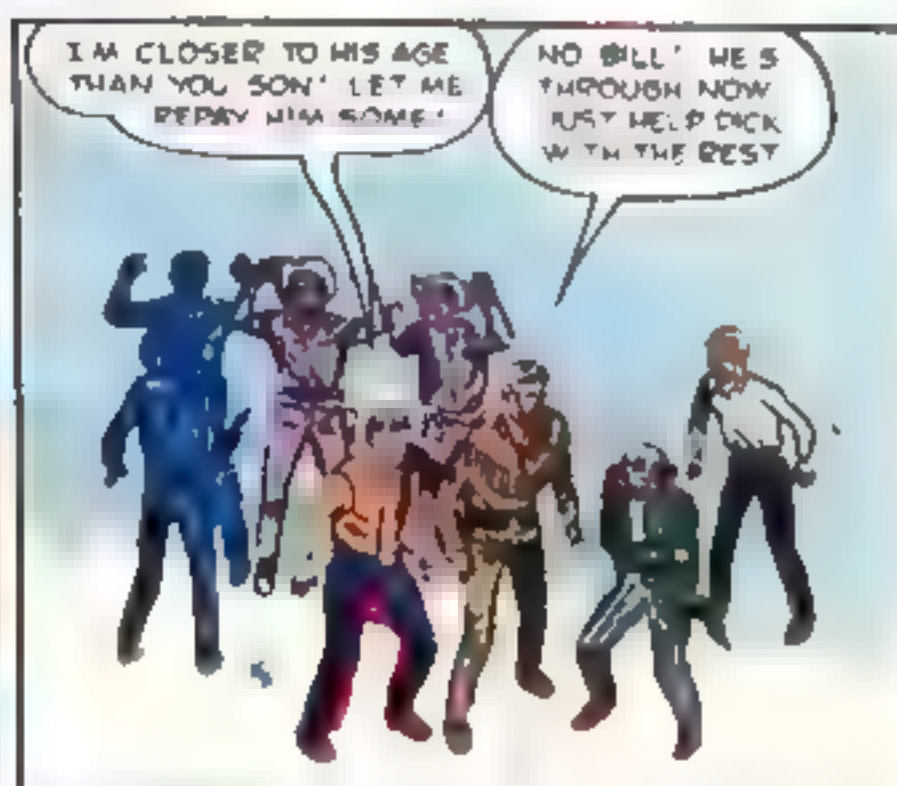
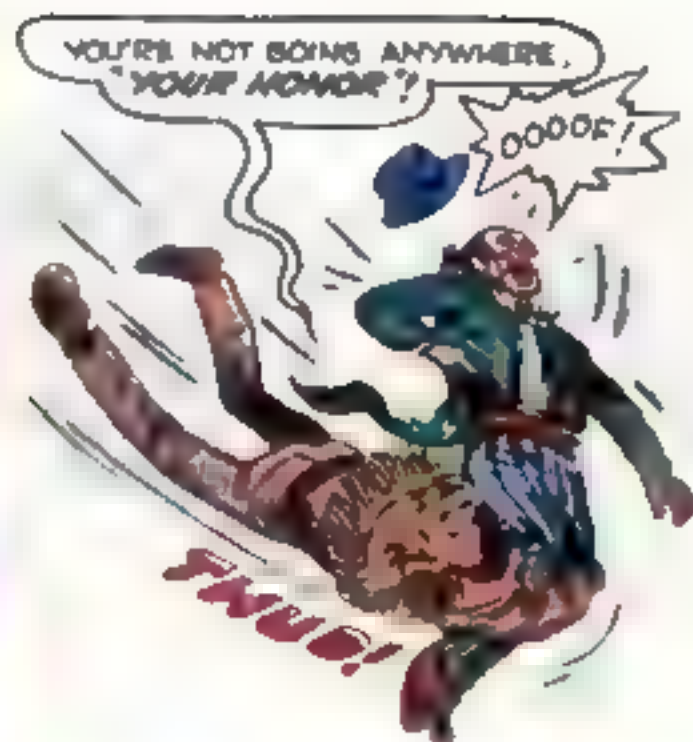
YOUR HONOR THE CHARGES AGAINST RANSOM BATT AND HIS GANG ARE KIDNAPPING, ASSAULT AND ATTEMPTED MURDER!



GENTLEMEN OF THE JURY YOU HAVE HEARD THE CASE WHAT IS YOUR VERDICT?

GUILTY YOUR HONOR, OF ALL CHARGES! WE RECOMMEND THAT THEY BE SENT TO THE COUNTY SEAT FOR FURTHER TRIAL!







We had the trail herd bedded down and had gathered around the chuckwagon when the cook said, "Rider comin'!" We watched while this lean, tired kid rode slowly in on a gaunt horse and waited politely to be asked before he dismounted.

We noted the show-off chaps with "Mitch" in fancy stitching on the edge, and the saddle. Especially the saddle. It was the gaudiest thing I ever saw... hand-carved floral design... fifteen pounds of silver on cantle and skirts... not the rig of a working cowboy! We all thought the same thing... tenderfoot from town.

While the cook filled a plate for him, the kid unsaddled, rubbed down the exhausted horse, then asked, "Who's trail boss?"

Old Man Tuttle admitted he was. The kid said, "Name's Mitchell. I missed the trail two days back. You got a job for a rider?"

Tuttle pulled at his mustache, thought a bit, and said, "Well, we ain't shorthanded..."

Swede Hanson cut in, real nasty, "We can always use a rider. You know one somewhere?" He grinned around at the rest of us. Swede didn't have any authority. He was just a hand, but he was the curly wolf of the outfit, and the kind that always rode anyone he thought he could lick. He was mean all the way through.

The kid said, "I'll make out to ride." He looked at Tuttle, "How about it, mister?"

Tuttle pulled the other side of his mustache. "Well now," he said slowly, "I don't rightly..."

Swede cut in again, "Boss, let's try him out! We'll just put that fancy saddle on Snake Hips! A ripenortin' fire eater like the kid here could show us plowhands some real ridin'!"

Snake Hips was king of our rough string. Everybody fought shy of him. Hammerheaded, big and ugly, he was a killer. A worse buck

I never saw. He had thrown us all.

Old Man Tuttle thought a while, then walked over and took a long look at the saddle where the kid had carefully laid it with the sheepskin off the ground. I was surprised when he came back and said, "All right, Swede, saddle Snake Hips. But get this straight! If the kid rides him, he takes your place ridin' point tomorrow, an' you ride drag, back in the dust, from here to shippin' point! An' if there's any trouble, I'll handle it personally!"

We roped and blindfolded Snake Hips. Swede kneed him in the ribs and jerked the latigo. The horse humped his back and squealed. When the kid yelled "Let 'er buck!" we jerked off the blindfold and ran for cover.

That vicious brute went straight up and came down so hard Mitchell's fancy tapaderos brushed the ground. He sunfished a full circle around the chuckwagon. When he slowed down a little, Mitchell batted him across the ears with his hat and thumped him in the shoulder.

The big black went crazy! Nobody had ever insulted him like that before. He pitched through the cook fire, scattering skillets and dutch oven. He slammed blindly into the chuckwagon, and the tailgate came down with a crash of cans and boxes. The kid got his foot clear before they hit, and back in the stirrup on the next jump. Whether it was he or the horse that headed for Swede, I don't know, but they nearly ran him down. Swede dived under the wagon just in time.

It was ten minutes before Snake Hips quit, a quarter mile out on the prairie, and nobody saw daylight between Mitch and the saddle, nor saw him hook a spur under a saddle skirt, or any such tricks. The big horse was licked, fair and square, and the kid led him in, gentle as a kitten!

Old Man Tuttle said, "Swede, pull that saddle off and rub him down! Don't be scared, he won't hurt you now! And take a **REAL GOOD** look at the saddle, like you didn't have sense enough to do before!"

We all crowded around the saddle. A silver plate, screwed to the back of the cantle, had engraved on it...

"Frontier Park, Cheyenne, Wyo.

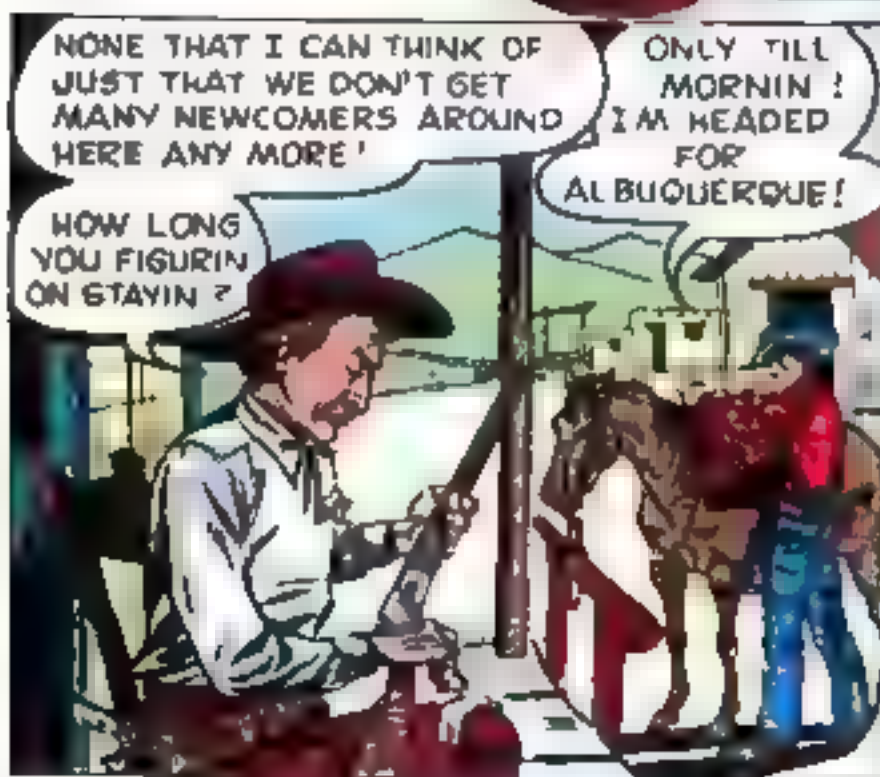
July 4, 1908

Awarded to Mitch Mitchell
First Prize... Bronc Riding"

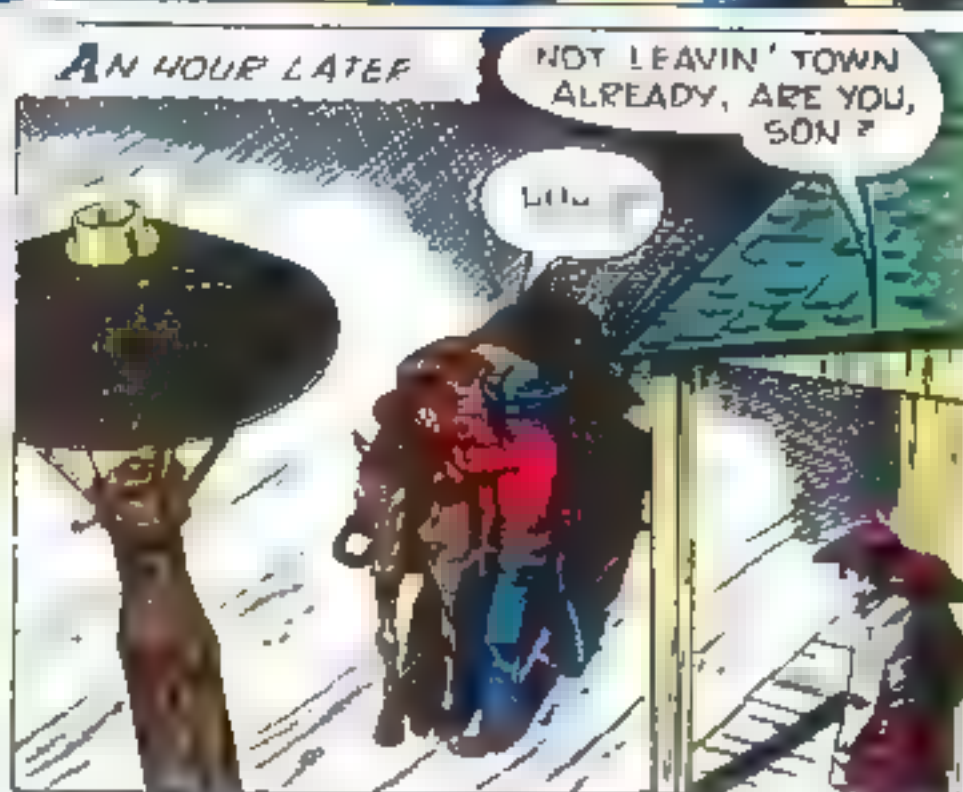
Sagebrush Stories

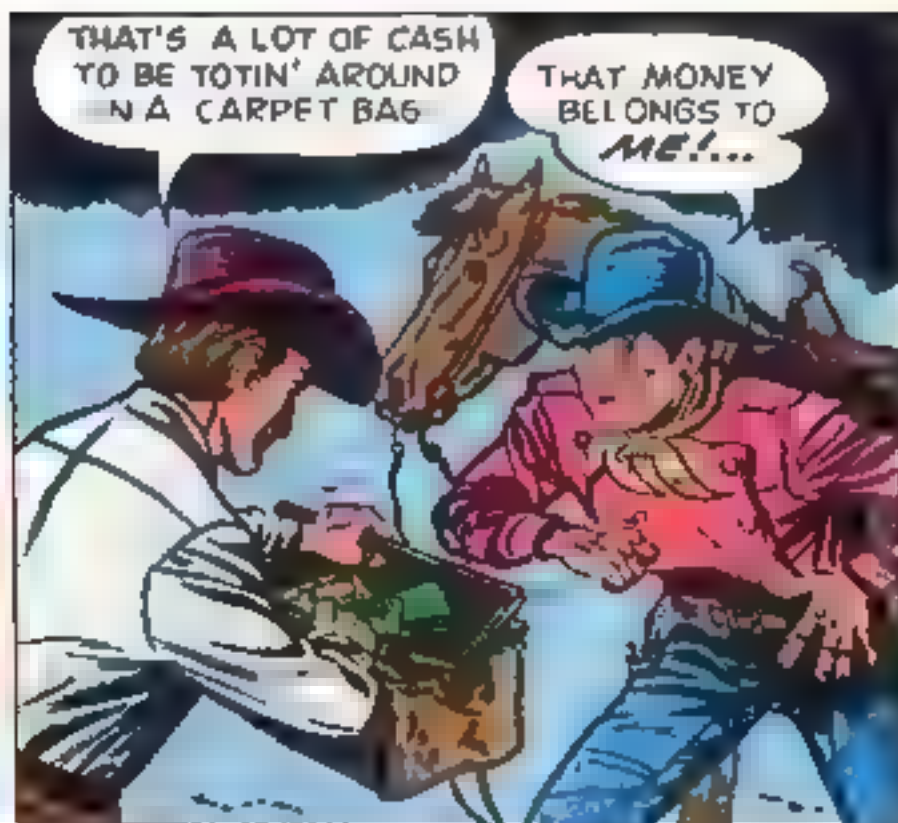


BLIND JUSTICE









The Flying A's RANGE RIDER

RUTHLESS RANCHER

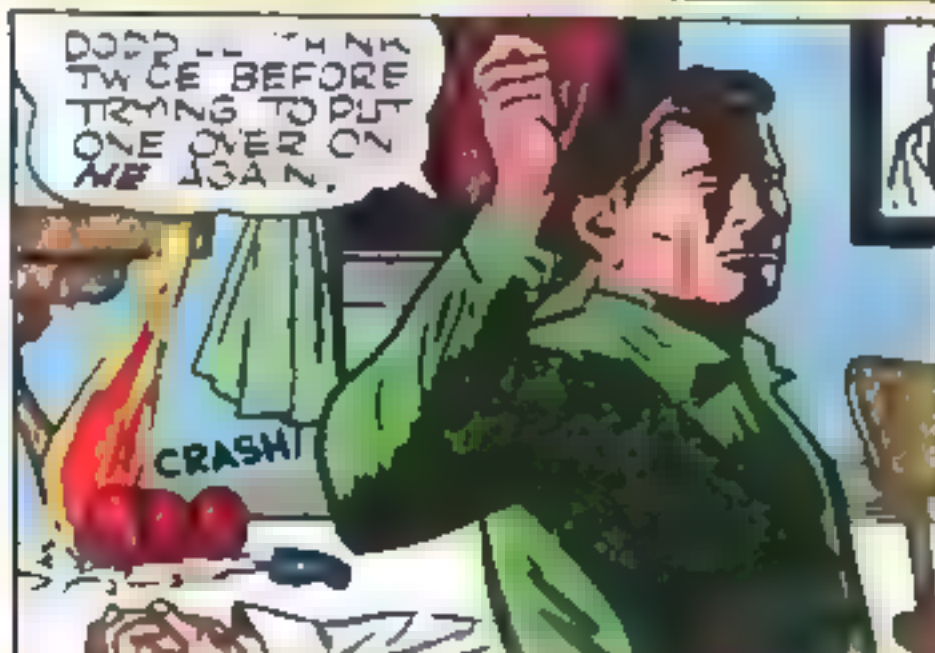
A FURIOUS FIGHT
IS GOING ON AT
JOE DODD'S RANCH,
NEAR REDROCK...



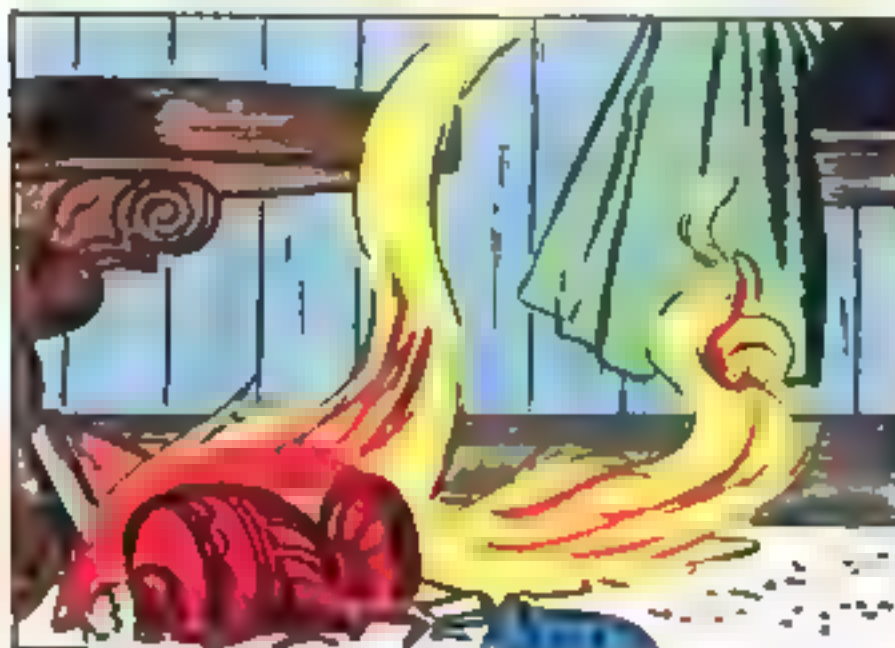
AS THE ANGRY VICTOR STORMS OUT,
UNWARE OF IMENDING DISASTER...



DODD -- THINK
TWICE BEFORE
TRYING TO PUT
ONE OVER ON
ME AGAIN.



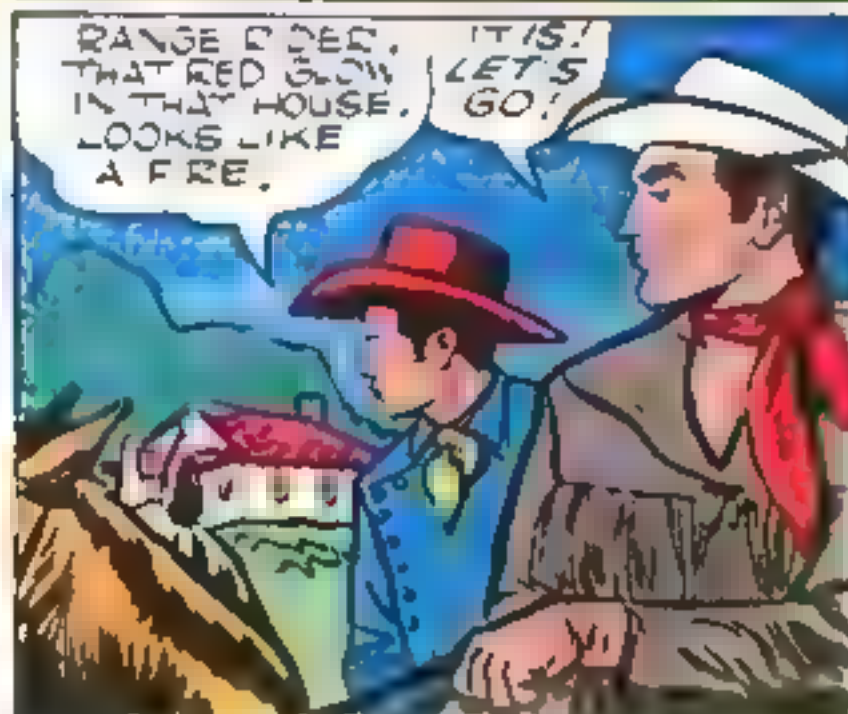
THE FIRE CREEPS ACROSS THE
CARPET UNTIL A SUDDEN DRAFT
FANS IT AND...

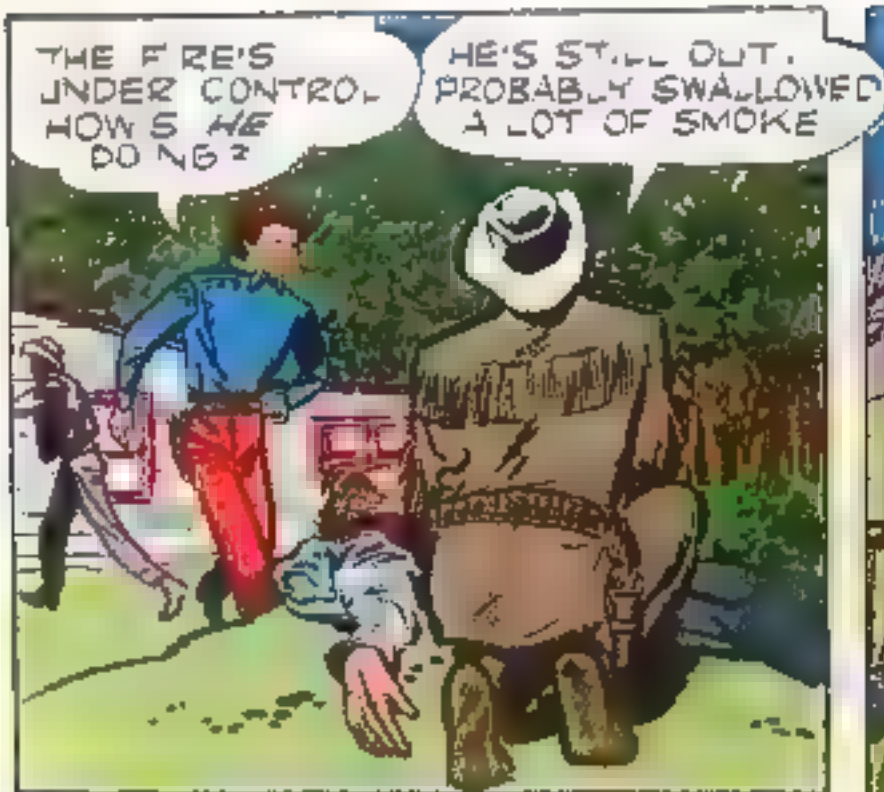


A MOMENT OR SO LATER...

RANGE RIDE,
THAT RED GLOW
IN THAT HOUSE,
LOOKS LIKE
A FIRE.

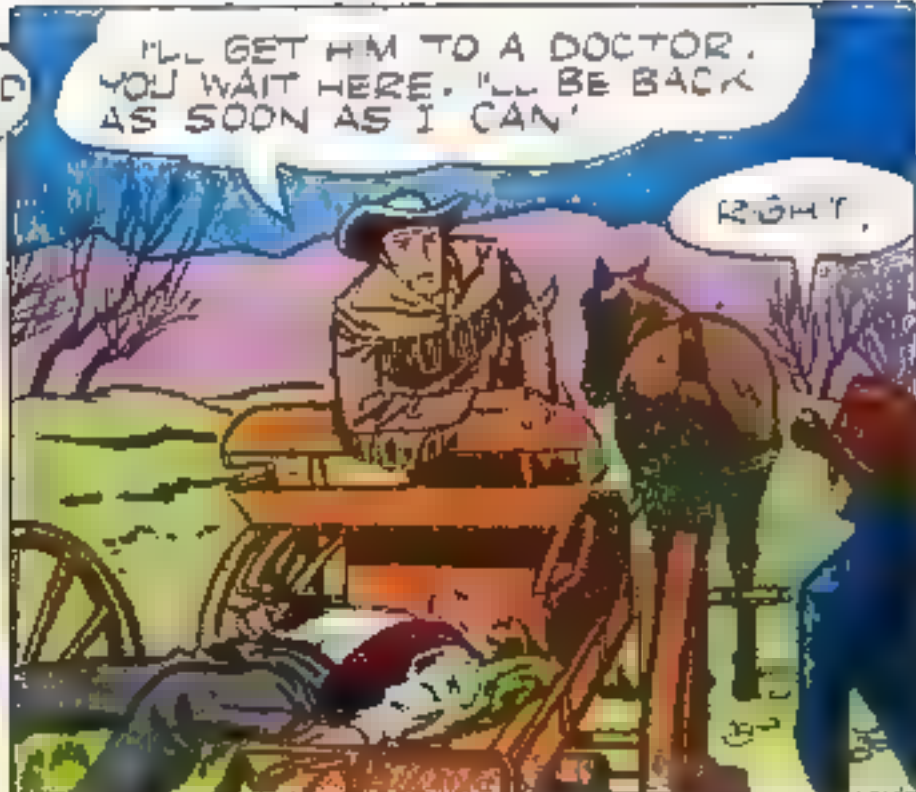
IT IS!
LET'S
GO!





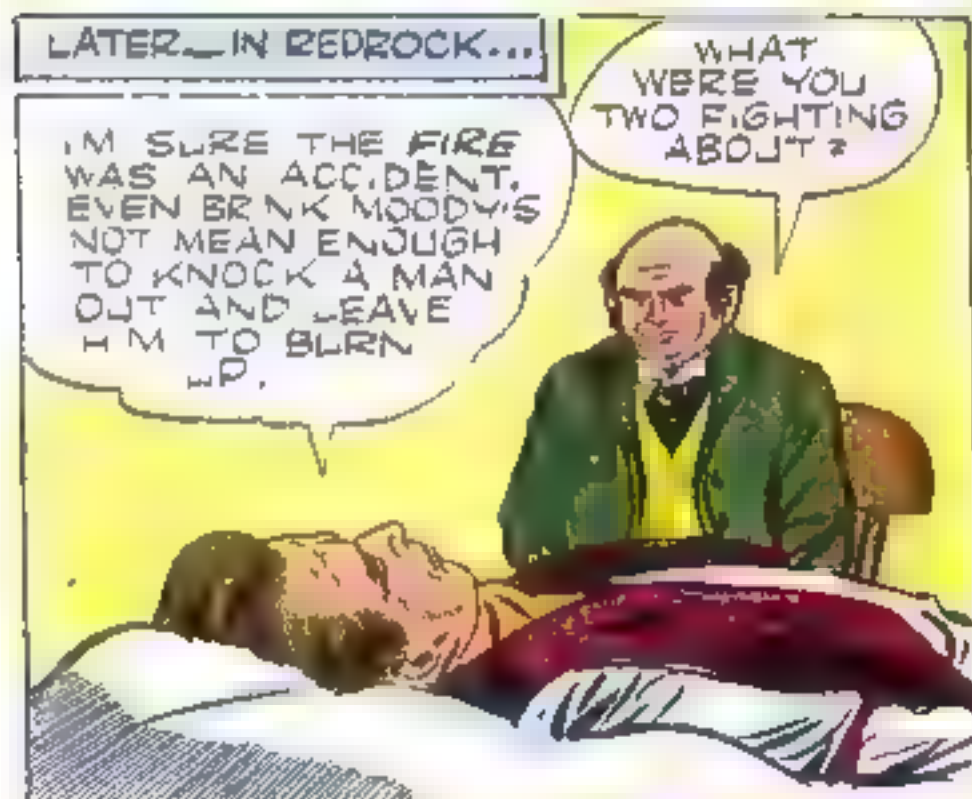
THE FIRE'S UNDER CONTROL. HOW'S HE DOING?

HE'S STILL OUT. PROBABLY SWALLOWED A LOT OF SMOKE



I'LL GET HIM TO A DOCTOR. YOU WAIT HERE. I'LL BE BACK AS SOON AS I CAN

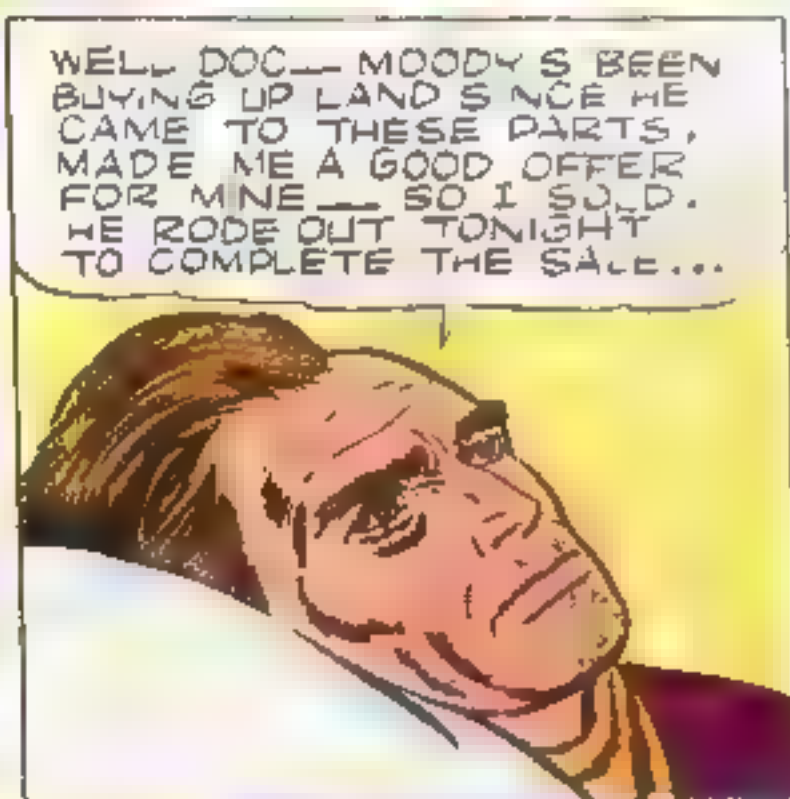
RIGHT.



LATER... IN REDROCK...

I'M SURE THE FIRE WAS AN ACCIDENT. EVEN BRN K MOODY'S NOT MEAN ENOUGH TO KNOCK A MAN OUT AND LEAVE HIM TO BURN UP.

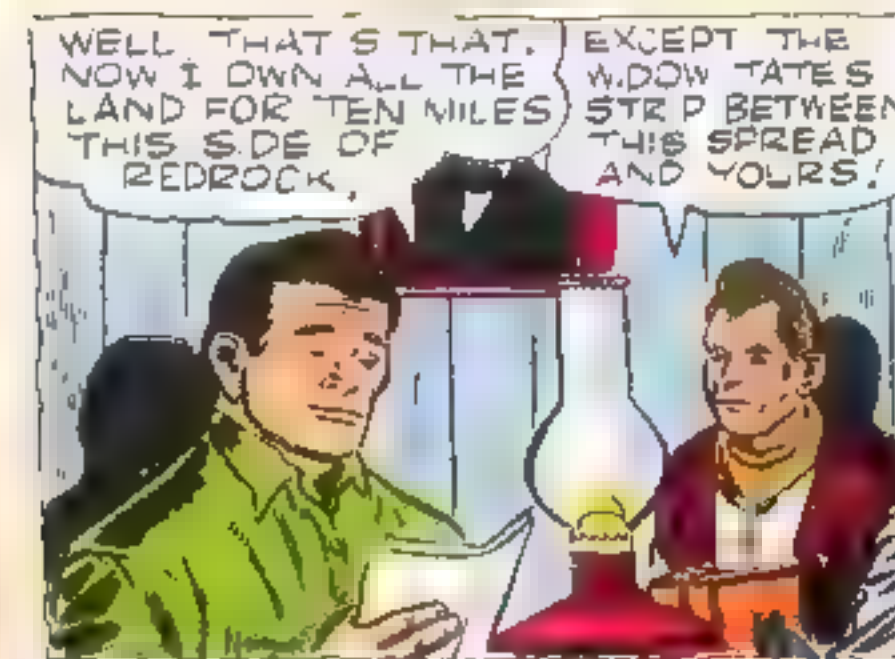
WHAT WERE YOU TWO FIGHTING ABOUT?



WELL, DOC... MOODY'S BEEN BUYING UP LAND SINCE HE CAME TO THESE PARTS, MADE ME A GOOD OFFER FOR MINE... SO I SOLD. HE RODE OUT TONIGHT TO COMPLETE THE SALE...

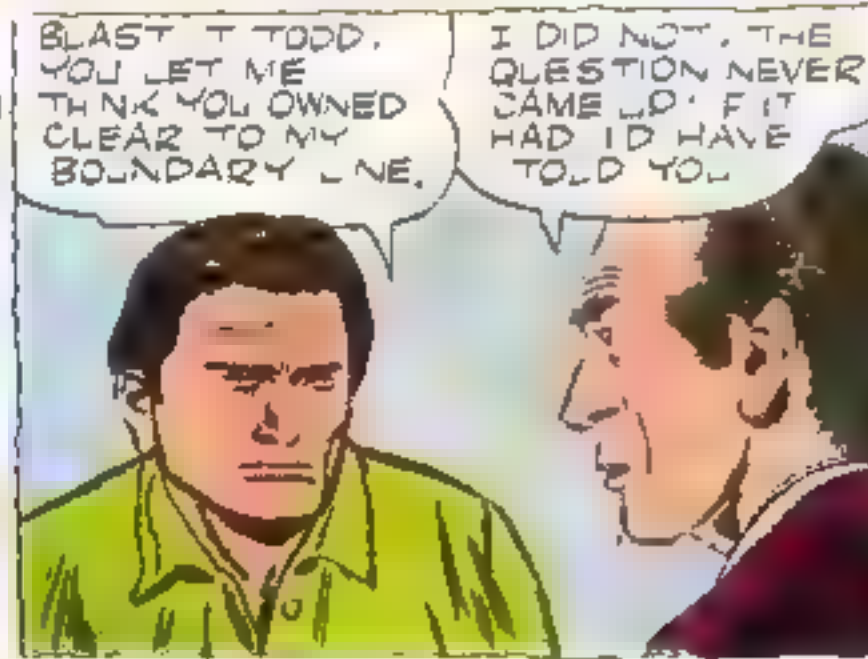
"EVERYTHING WAS OKAY UNTIL HE WAS READY TO LEAVE..."

"THAT NEWS ROCKED HIM BACK ON HIS HEELS! MADE HIM MAD TOO."



WELL THAT'S THAT. NOW I OWN ALL THE LAND FOR TEN MILES THIS SIDE OF REDROCK.

EXCEPT THE WIDOW TATE'S STRIP BETWEEN THIS SPREAD AND YOURS!



BLAST IT TODD, YOU LET ME THINK YOU OWNED CLEAR TO MY BOUNDARY LINE.

I DID NOT. THE QUESTION NEVER CAME UP. IF IT HAD I'D HAVE TOLD YOU

HE CALLED ME A LIAR...
AND SWUNG ON ME! WE
MIXED IT UP! AND YOU
KNOW THE REST. NOW
DOC HOW ABOUT
LETTING THE RANGE
RIDER DRIVE ME HOME?

I GUESS IT'S
ALL RIGHT!
BUT YOU'D
BETTER
TAKE IT
EASY FOR
A COUPLE
OF DAYS!



A LITTLE LATER...

YOU MUST BE DICK WEST,
THE RANGE RIDER TOLD
ME ABOUT YOU! THANKS
FOR HELPING OUT WITH
THE FEE, WHAT'S
THE DAMAGE?

NOT BAD!
A COUPLE OF
DAYS' WORK AND
THINGS WILL BE
AS GOOD AS
NEW!



YOU TWO BOYS MUST BE TIRED.
WHY DON'T YOU BED DOWN HERE
TONIGHT? I'D BE MIGHTY GLAD
TO HAVE YOU.

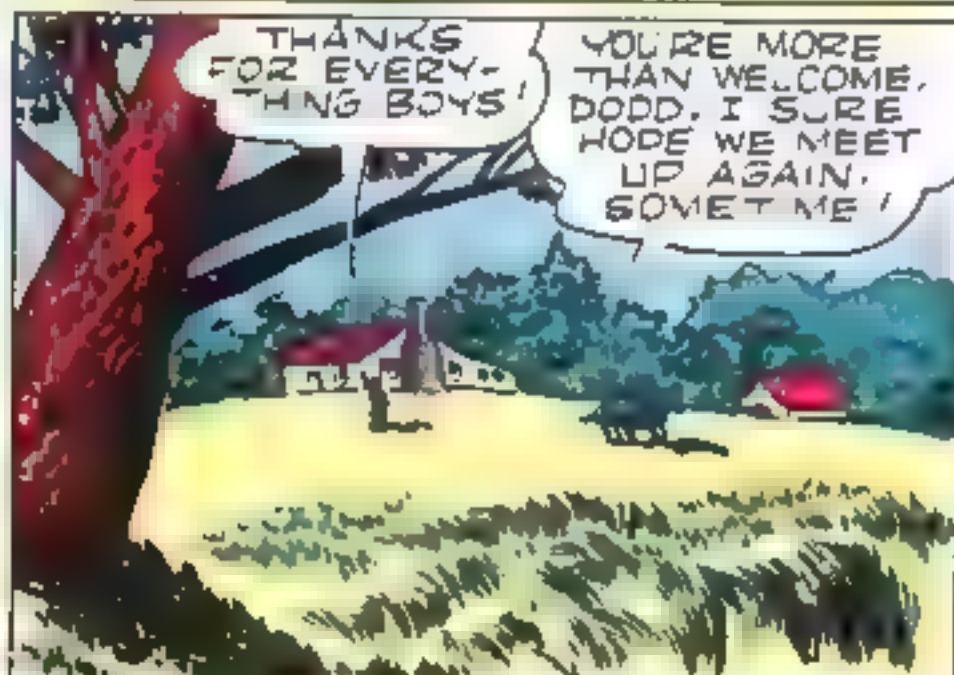
THANKS!
WE'LL TAKE
YOU UP ON
THAT!



EARLY THE NEXT MORNING, AT
DODD'S RANCH...

THANKS
FOR EVERY-
THING BOYS!

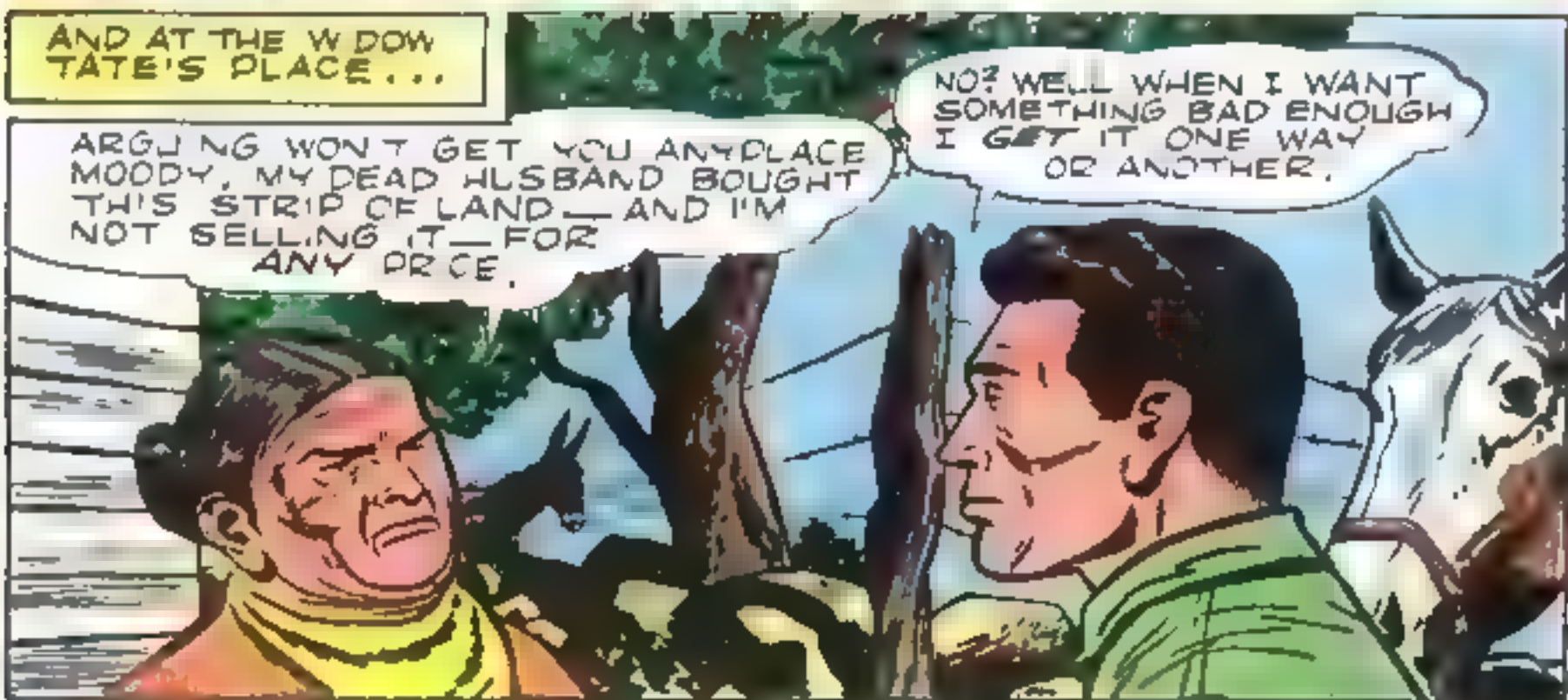
YOU'RE MORE
THAN WELCOME,
DODD. I SURE
HOPE WE MEET
UP AGAIN.
SOMETIME!

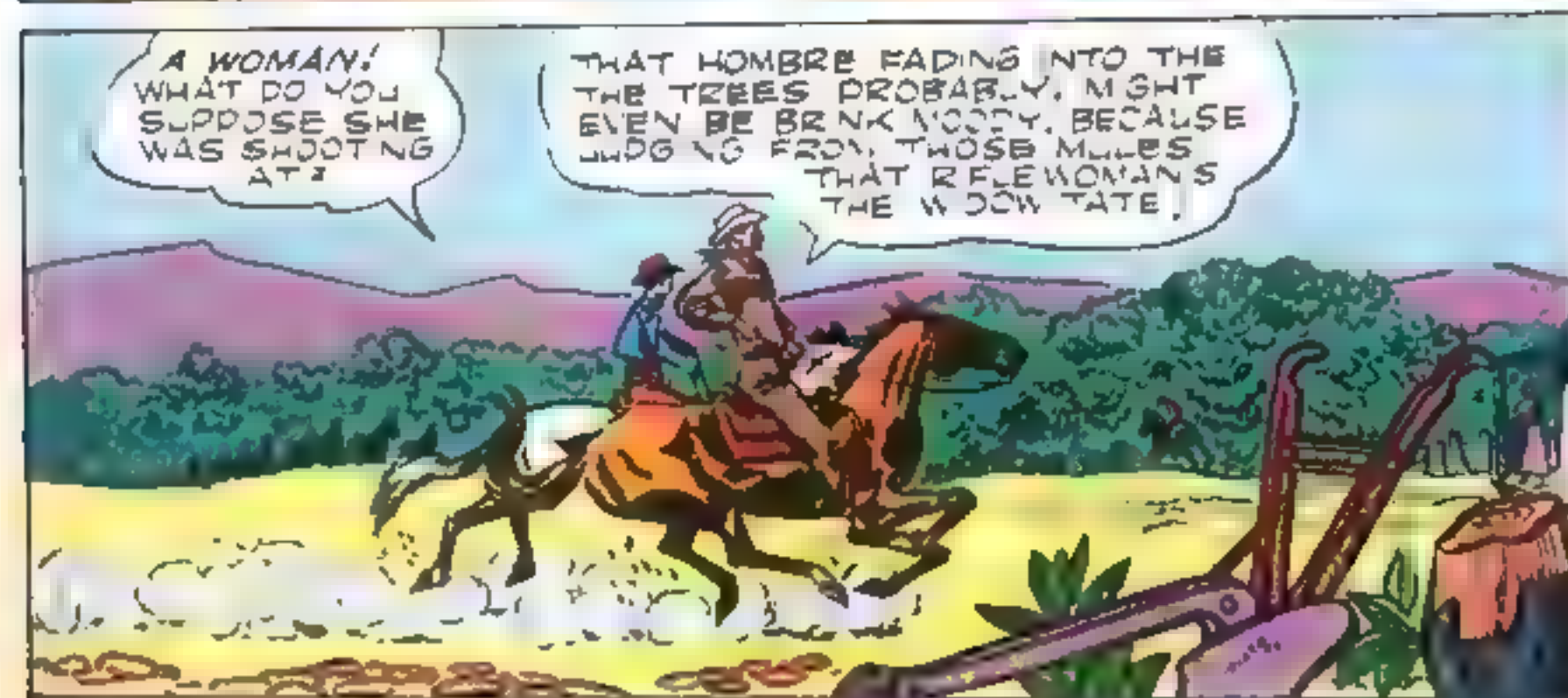
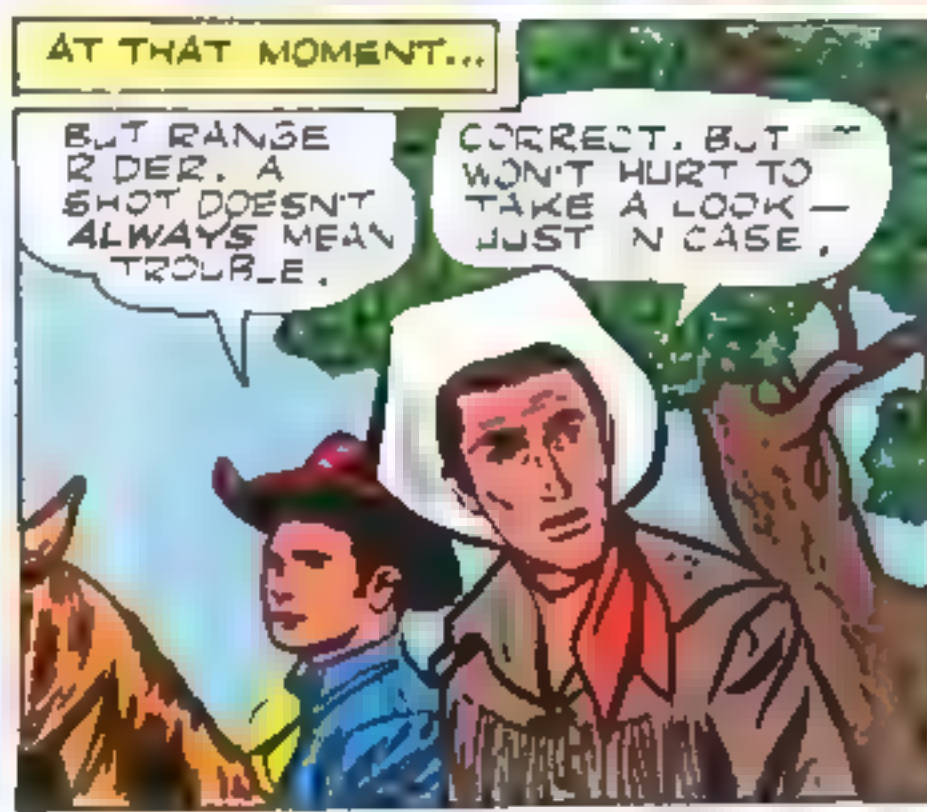
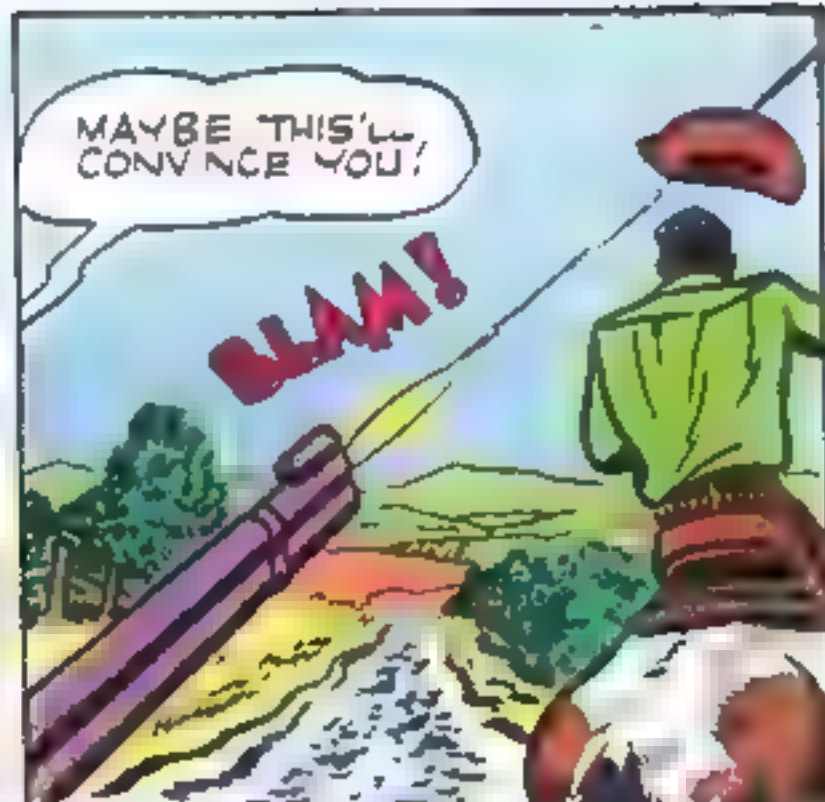


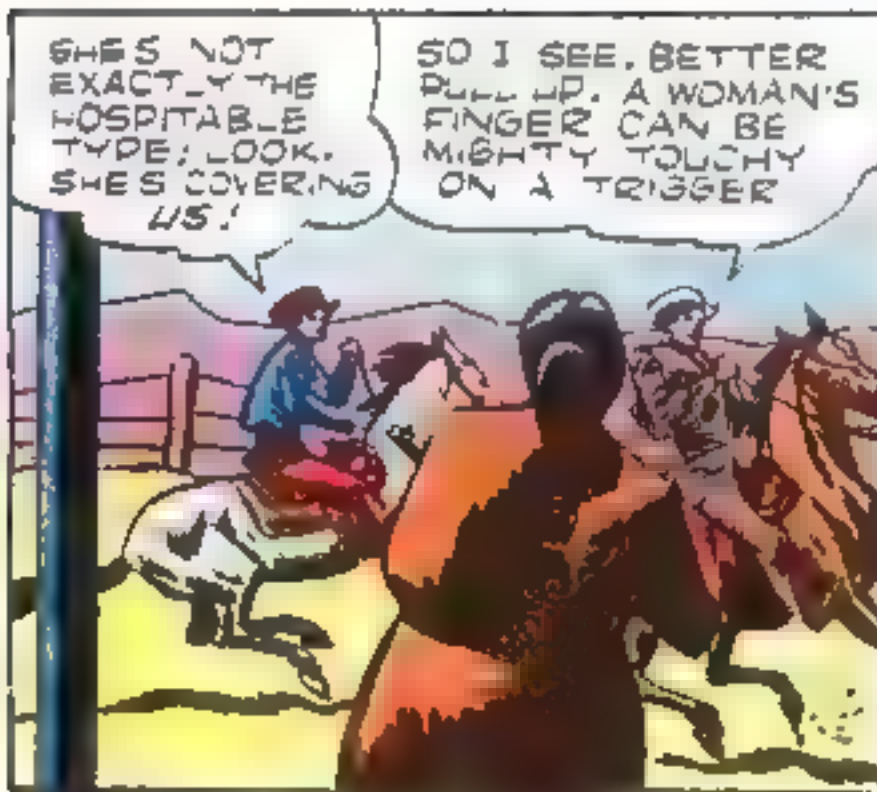
AND AT THE WIDOW
TATE'S PLACE...

ARGUING WON'T GET YOU ANYPLACE
MOODY. MY DEAD HUSBAND BOUGHT
THIS STRIP OF LAND—AND I'M
NOT SELLING IT—FOR
ANY PRICE.

NO? WELL WHEN I WANT
SOMETHING BAD ENOUGH
I GET IT ONE WAY
OR ANOTHER.

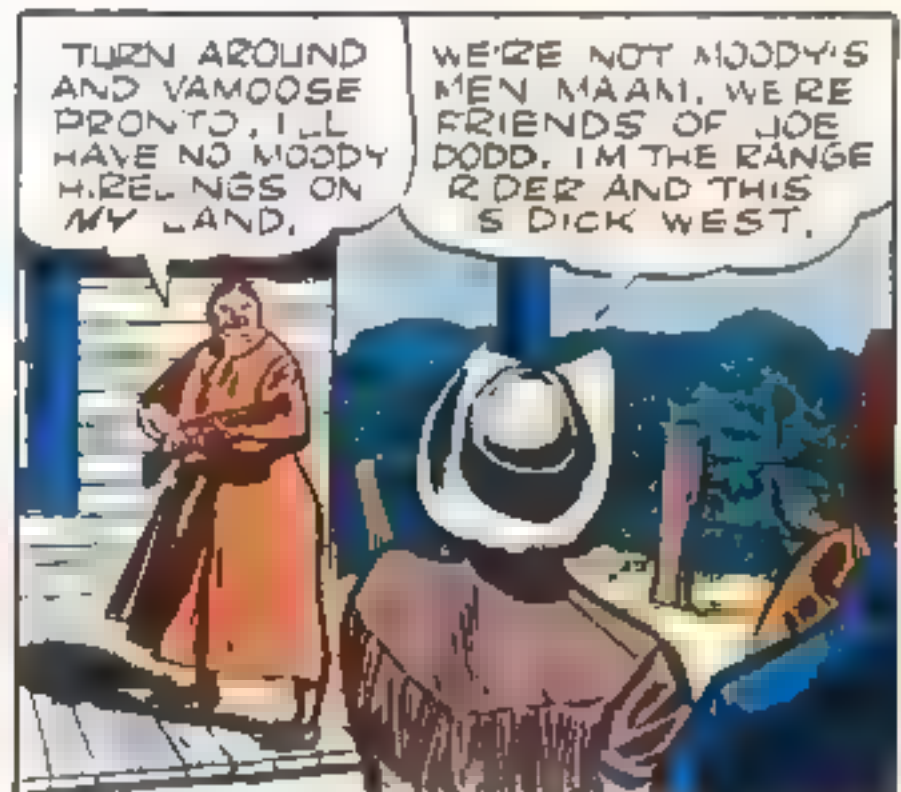






SHE'S NOT EXACTLY THE HOSPITABLE TYPE; LOOK, SHE'S COVERING US!

SO I SEE. BETTER PULL UP. A WOMAN'S FINGER CAN BE MIGHTY TOUCHY ON A TRIGGER



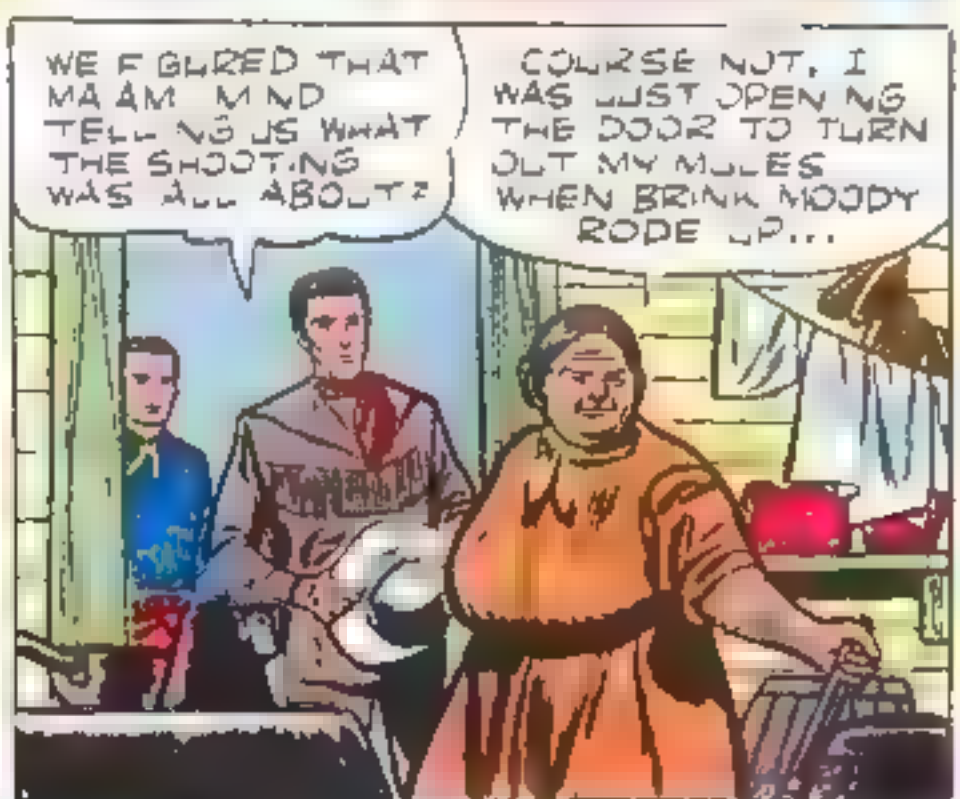
TURN AROUND AND VAMOOSE PRONTO, I'LL HAVE NO MOODY HIRELINGS ON MY LAND.

WE'RE NOT MOODY'S MEN MAAM, WE'RE FRIENDS OF JOE DODD. I'M THE RANGE RIDER AND THIS IS DICK WEST.



WE HEARD THE GUNSHOTS AND THOUGHT SOMEBODY MIGHT NEED HELP.

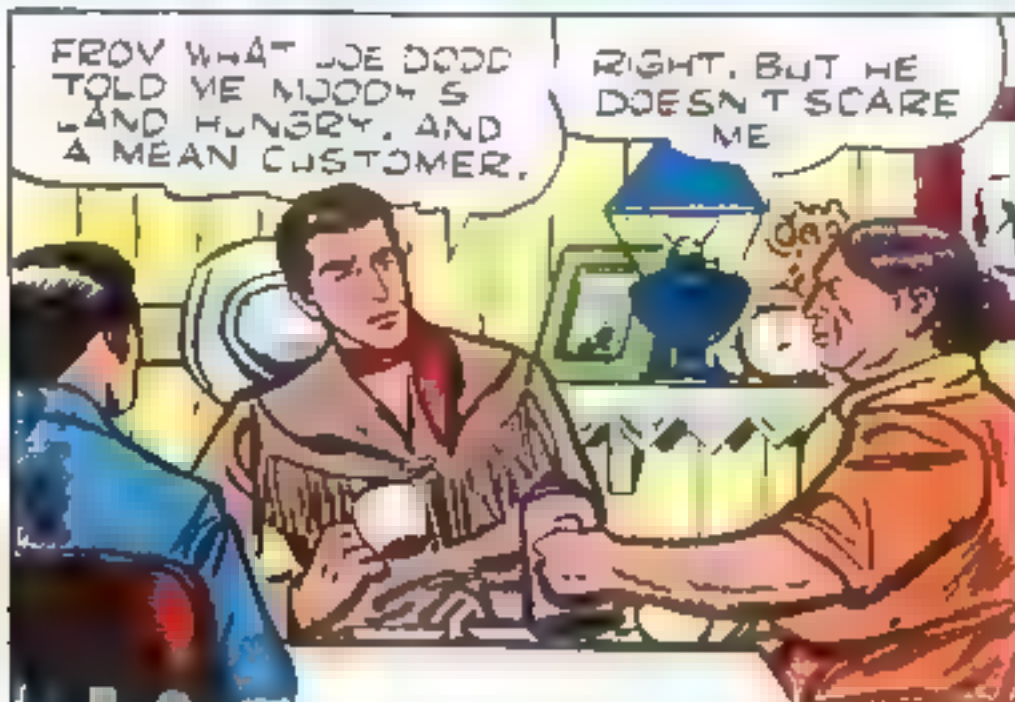
WELL NOW, THAT'S REAL KIND THINKING LIGHT— AND COME INSIDE, WE GOT FRESH COFFEE ON THE FIRE, BY THE WAY M'ABBY TATE.



WE FIGURED THAT MA'AM M'D TELLING US WHAT THE SHOOTING WAS ALL ABOUT?

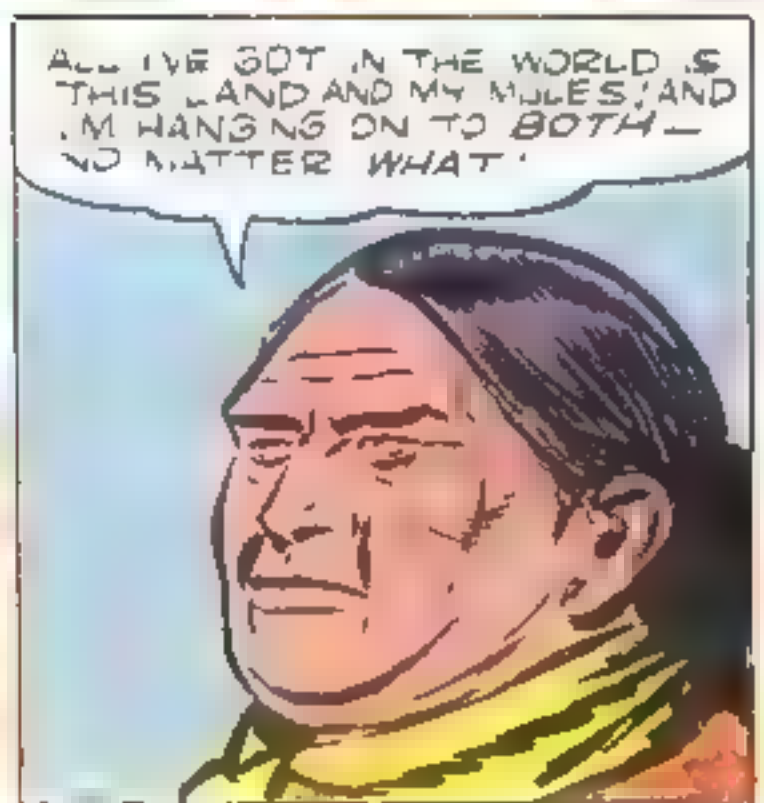
COURSE NOT, I WAS JUST OPENING THE DOOR TO TURN OUT MY MULES WHEN BRINK MOODY RODE UP...

AFTER THE WIDOW TELLS HER STORY...

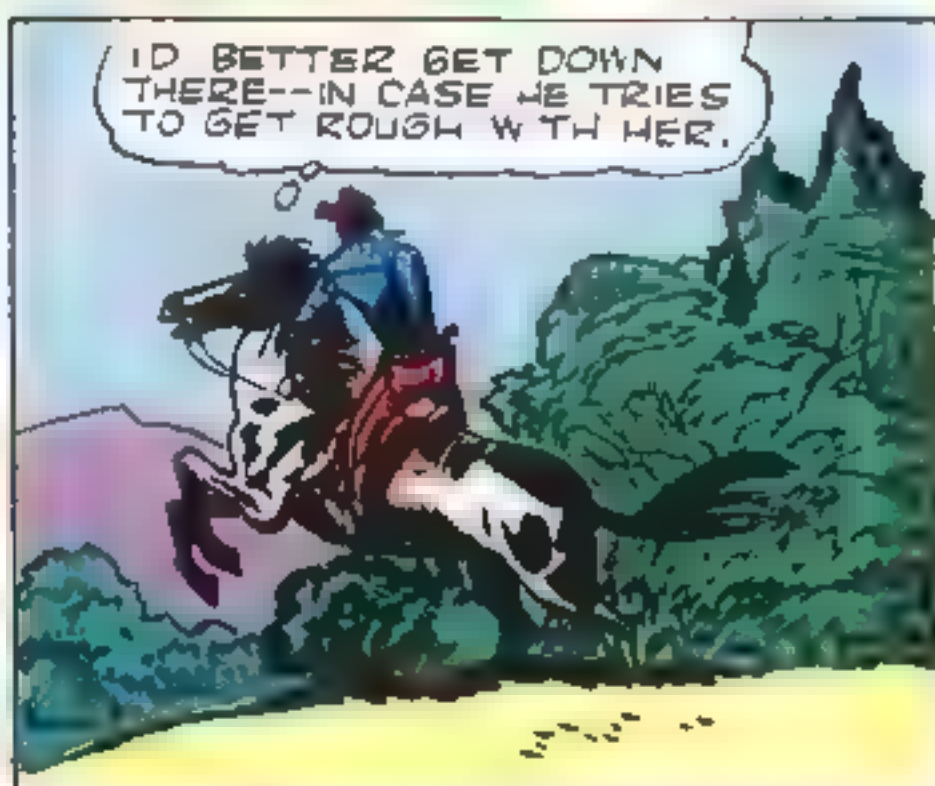
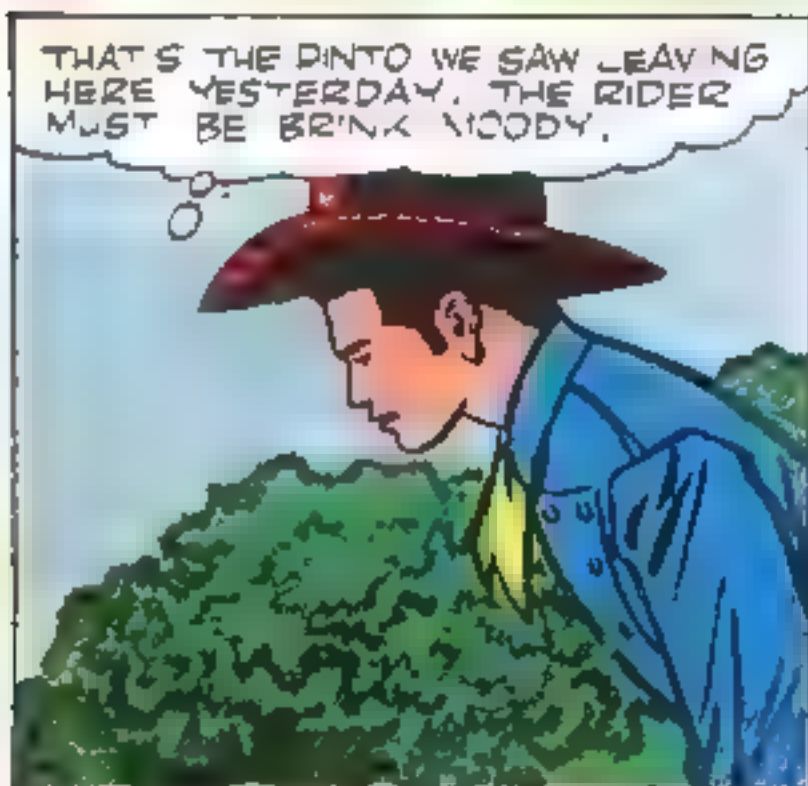
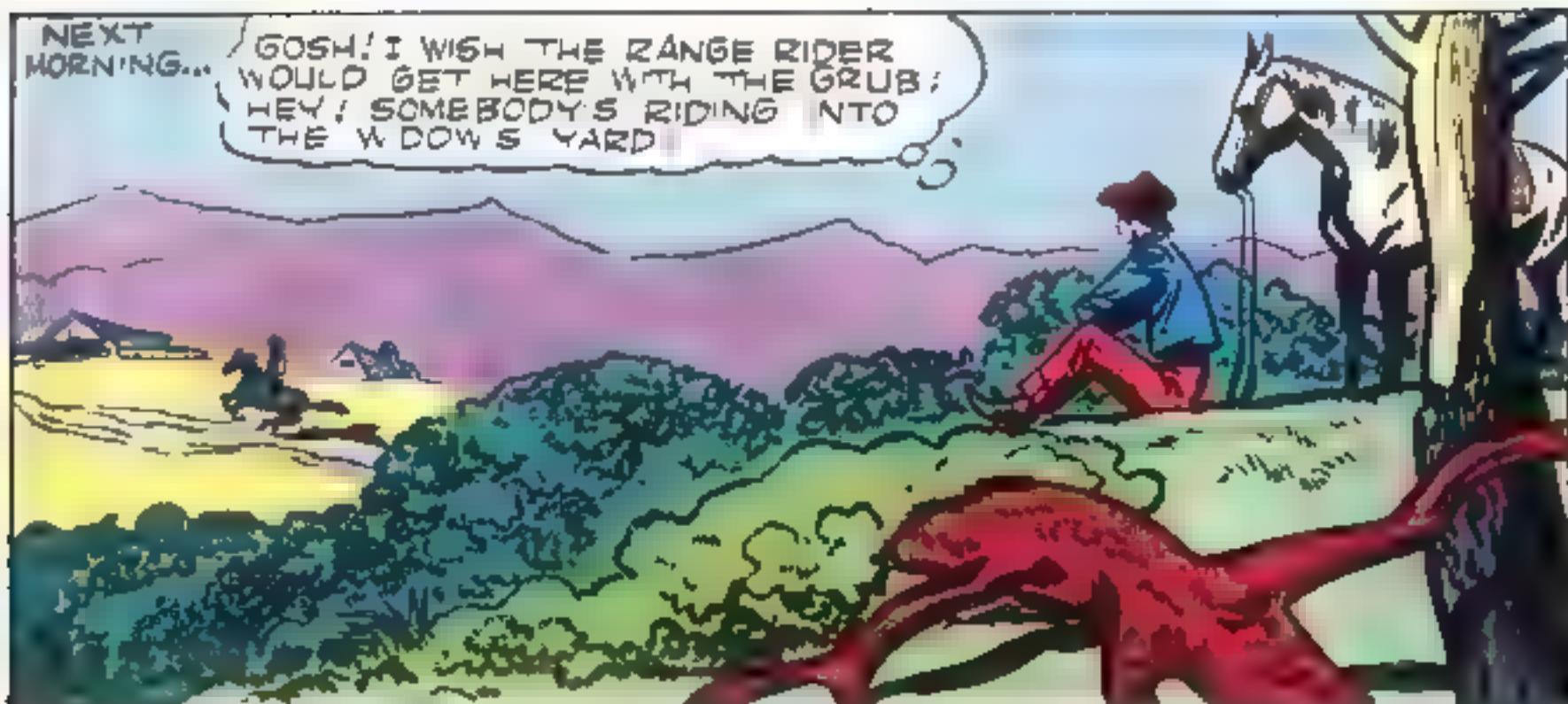


FROM WHAT JOE DODD TOLD ME MOODY'S LAND HUNGRY, AND A MEAN CUSTOMER.

RIGHT, BUT HE DOESN'T SCARE ME

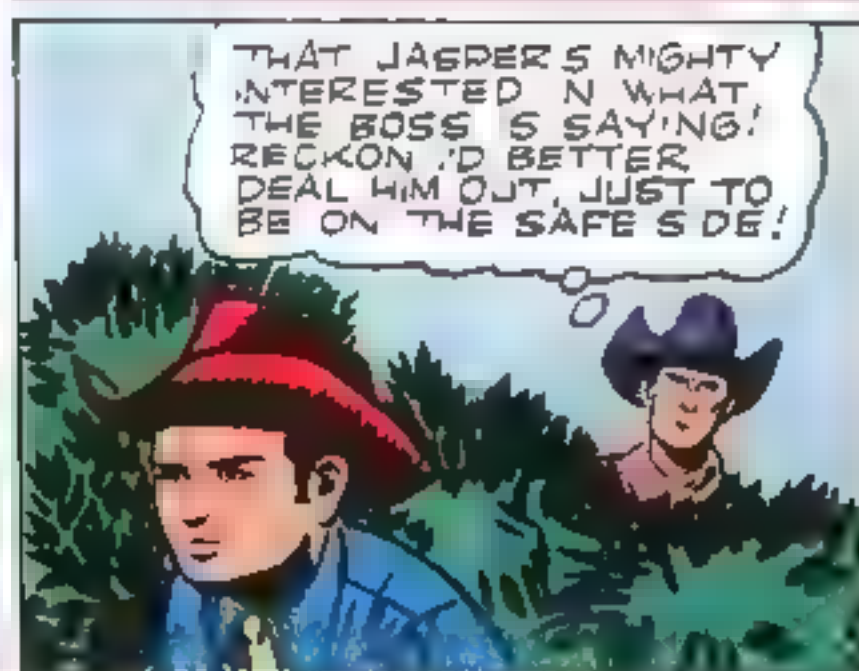


ALL I'VE GOT IN THE WORLD IS THIS LAND AND MY MULES, AND I'M HANGING ON TO BOTH— NO MATTER WHAT!



DISMOUNTING AT THE BOTTOM OF THE HILL, DICK STEALS CLOSER...

BUT THIS TIME, MOODY HASN'T COME ALONE...



SUDDENLY, LUCKY NEIGHS
IN WARNING...



THE WIDOW TURNS THE MULES
OUT TO GRAZE...

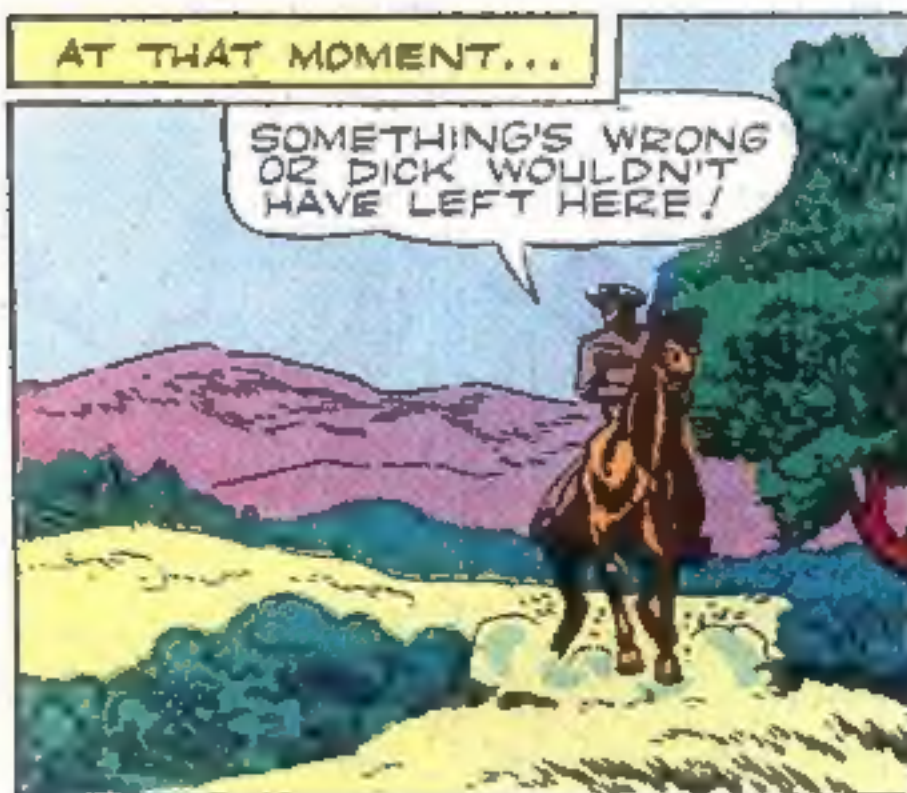


THEN HEADS BACK TOWARD
THE CLOTHESLINE...



AT THAT MOMENT...

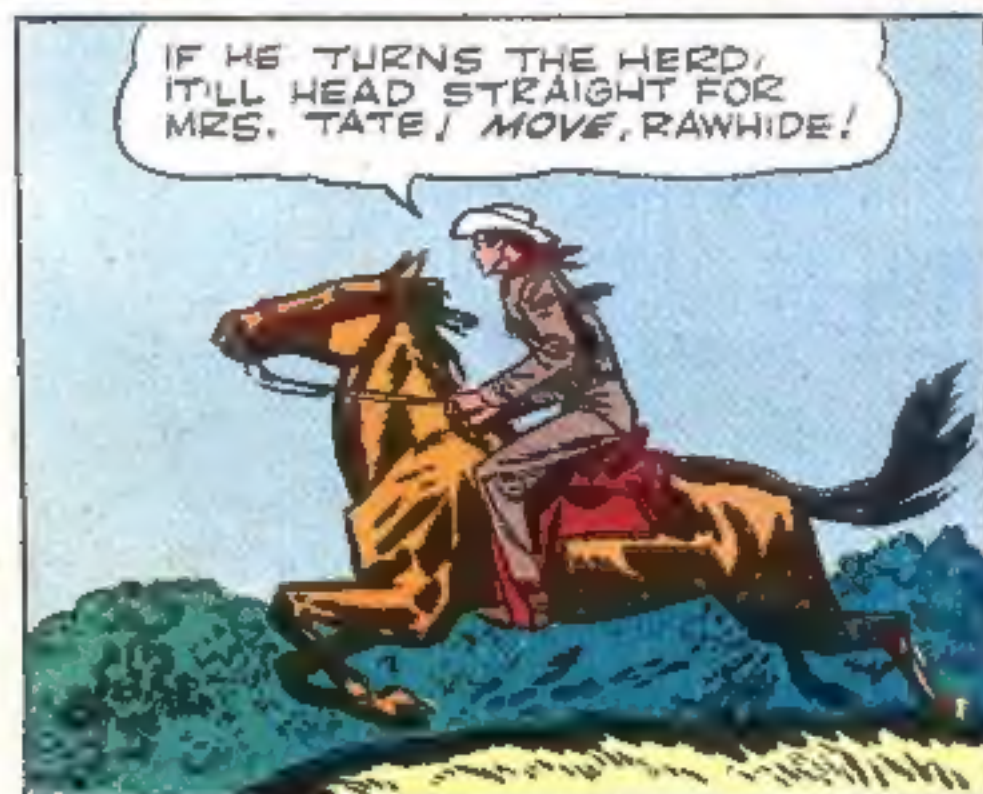
SOMETHING'S WRONG
OR DICK WOULDN'T
HAVE LEFT HERE!



THAT HOMBRE AT THE EDGE
OF THE CLEARING! LOOKS
LIKE HE AIMS TO SPOOK
THOSE MULES!

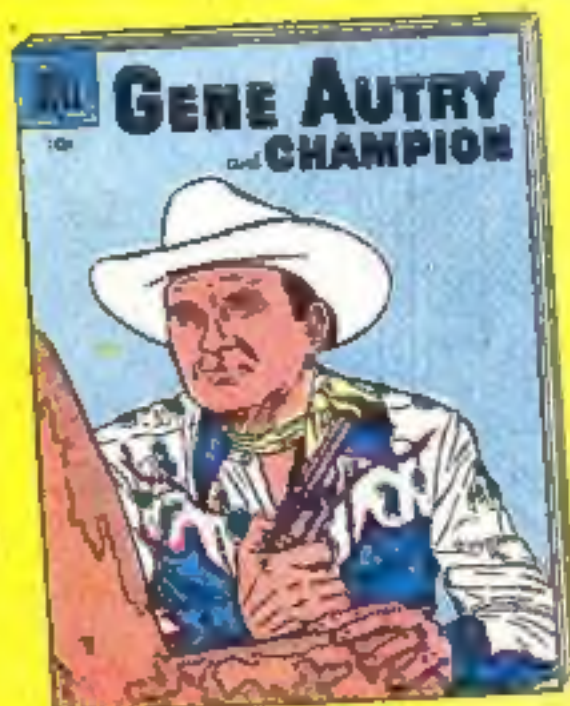
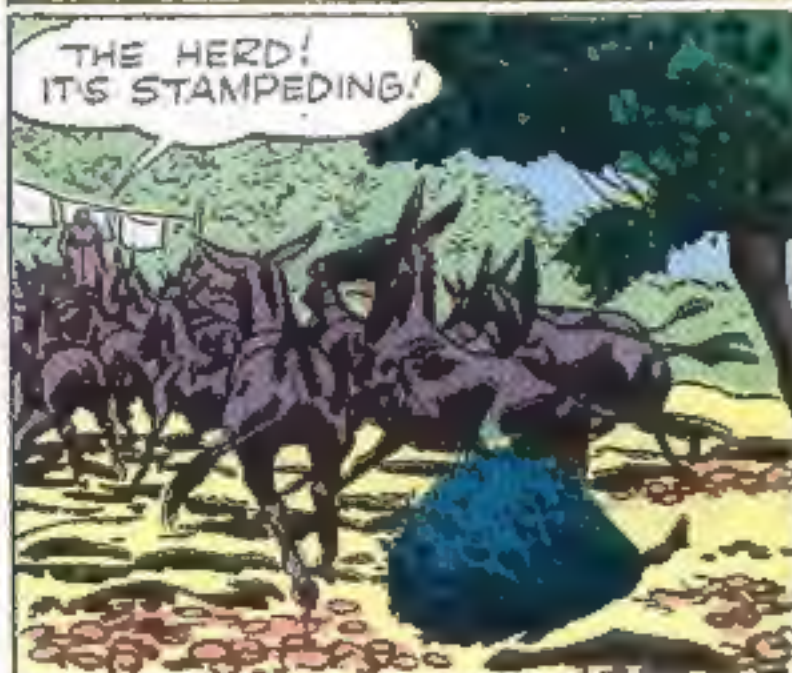


IF HE TURNS THE HERD,
IT'LL HEAD STRAIGHT FOR
MRS. TATE! MOVE, RAWHIDE!



THE HERD, SPOOKED BY THE
BOUNCING TUMBLEWEED, STAMPEDES...

THE HERD!
IT'S STAMPEDING!



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THE MULES WILL FOLLOW
THE BELL-MARE! THEY
ALWAYS DO! IF I CAN
TURN HER...



THUNDERING FORWARD, THE RANGE
RIDER GRABS THE BELL-MARE'S
NECK STRAP...



AND TURNS HER JUST IN TIME...



BLASTED SMART-ALECK! I'LL
FIX HIM! HEAD OVER INTO
THOSE TREES, DANDY!
CATCH THEM IN A CROSSFIRE!
HURRY!



INTO THE HOUSE, MRS.
TATE! ON THE DOUBLE!

BLAM!



GUNSHOTS!—AND COMPANY!
THAT'S THE BIRD WHO
ATTACKED ME!





BUT RANGE RIDER IS TOO FAST AND...



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